

BABY-VISITING.

BY MRS. A. M. F. ANNAN.

"THEY do, indeed, look very sweet, Hester," said Mrs. Dunham, after arraying her three children for a walk; "and I think I should be of the same opinion even if I were not their mother. They are in remarkably fine health, to the credit, I suppose I may venture to say, of our faithful nursing, and their spirits are charming from the effects of this lovely spring weather. I have never before felt quite so proud of them, and for once I will lay aside my objections to their visiting, and send them to see a few of my friends. There are several ladies who have expressed a wish that I should do so, and with so much apparent sincerity, that I think it would really afford them pleasure. Mrs. Fenwick, in particular, who has exactly the same number and of nearly the same ages, is quite desirous of comparing their growth and appearance with those of her three, and Mrs. Colgar, who takes a profound interest in the training of children, and makes them her peculiar study——"

"Mrs. Colgar, ma'am, the large lady with blue spectacles, who always has books in her hand when she calls?" said Hester, interrogatively.

"The same; you know her house in —— street. I have no doubt she will appreciate the care which has made the manners of our little pets so engaging; though, if you should see her, do not let Willy talk *quite* so much as he usually does at home. You must not forget my two old friends, Mrs. Brice and her sister, Miss Patty Carey. The old ladies are doatingly fond of children—equally so, I believe, though they have rather different ways of showing it. Mrs. Brice is one of those persons who would kill them with kindness, so be careful and don't let her stuff them with cakes and candies; and caution them against being frightened at any odd ways which Miss Patty may take to amuse them. You may also call with them at Mrs. Hallowell's. I should like them to have her children for playmates, for she is so perfectly correct herself in all that relates to politeness, that I presume she takes the greatest pains with their manners. I felt quite flattered on her proposing a visit from mine. Mrs. Towson is another friend who appears anxious to see them. She stopped me on the street on Monday whilst I was out shopping, and requested me particularly to send them this week. There are other places where they would meet with a warm reception, but you cannot well get round more than these this afternoon. Now wrap little Charley well in his cloak; shake day-day, mother's baby;—kiss mamma, Willy and Lizzy, and mind what Hester tells you."

Hester, who was a woman of observation as

well as an experienced nurse, did not altogether relish the proposed infraction of a rule which she had assisted in establishing; but it was not in her part to demur, and she quietly led off the children on the prescribed tour. She might well have been proud of her little charges, for among the many juvenile parties swarming the streets in the early April sunshine, there were few that in beauty and sprightliness could compare with her own. Willy, the eldest, was five years old, a bright-eyed little fellow, with ruddy cheeks and soft brown hair curling to his shoulders; Lizzy, the second, was much like her brother; and the third was a chubby, crowing baby in its tenth month. They were simply and comfortably clad, and in their gentle and graceful demeanour, as well as their dress, gave evidence of the care of a judicious as well as a fond mother.

The first stopping place to which they came was the house of Mrs. Hallowell, a lady who, conventionally, might have been styled one of Mrs. Dunham's best acquaintances. She lived in handsome style, belonged to a family of the highest standing, and was unexceptionably well-bred. Her bearing, indeed, was cold and stately, but was not the less admired on that account by Mrs. Dunham, who presumed that where so few professions were made the few must be sincere.

"Mrs. Dunham has sent her children to see Mrs. Hallowell," said Hester, at the door; and the servant by whom it was opened requested her to wait in the passage.

The back parlour door was open, and through that Hester could hear the voice of Mrs. Hallowell from the front room, saying—"An invasion of Lilliputians, it seems. I could have guessed that they were Mrs. Dunham's, for my acquaintances of longer standing know me too well to suppose that I would consider such an irruption any thing of a favour. I have too many children of my own to submit to being bored with those of my neighbours, though when one meets those very domestic young mothers, it is difficult to avoid the civility of humouring their hobbies. Oh, pray don't go, Miss Dexter—I sha'n't have them brought in here. I never allow my own to come into the parlours. I would as soon admit so many spaniels; and as to having my carpets soiled and my bijouterie broken by other people's children, that's out of the question. Direct the woman into the nursery with them, Henderson;—or no, the nursery dinner is not yet over, and if we admit visitors, the china and glass will hardly survive the consequences. Tell her, Henderson, that I am extremely sorry I

cannot have the pleasure of entertaining Mrs. Dunham's little folks, but that I am now engaged to see my dress-maker, and hope their mother will send them on some other occasion. Excuse me for not going to the door with you, Miss Dexter—I never use ceremony with you."

Hester had turned to retreat before the man had delivered his message, and on the steps was overtaken by Miss Dexter, who was an indefatigable visitor of Mrs. Dunham and every body else.

"Well, youngsters, are you out visiting?" said she. "Mind and behave like good children, wherever you go."

Mrs. Fenwick's was the next place for calling, and the party were shown at once into the parlours, as if such visits were matters of frequency. There they found Miss Dexter, who had arrived before them. Mrs. Fenwick, a young, gaily-dressed woman, hurried forward to welcome them.

"Oh, what dear little things!" she exclaimed. "Sit down, nurse, and rest yourself, and let me hold the baby. What is his name—Charley?—and the little girl, I believe, is Lizzy. I have a boy just her age, a nice little fellow, that will do for a beau for you, darling. My Ellen Ann has gone out for a promenade; she is a month younger than Master Willy, here. I got her a new chip hat with flowers, yesterday, and an India muslin mantilla, lined with blossom colour, and there was no peace with her until I gave her leave to go out and show them. She will be sorry to have missed such nice little visitors. Oh, what a solid, heavy baby—and what pretty blue eyes it has; and what rosy little cheeks;—and such a warm, blue cloak and soft worsted cap!"

And whilst Mrs. Fenwick was assiduously caressing the baby, she fingered, with the air of an amateur, the merino of its cloak, and adroitly turned it inside out to inspect the lining.

"*Apropos* of babies' cloaks," said Miss Dexter; "I believe you missed getting the one that was raffled for, did you not?"

"Oh, don't name it—I was so disappointed. I was sure of getting it, for I took eight dollars' worth of shares. It was a lovely thing—the embroidery was so rich and the lining so beautifully quilted. I set my heart on it the moment I saw it, but I considered the price too exorbitant to be thought of, and I was glad to hear that it was to be put up at a raffle. After all, I might just as well have bought it at regular sale—for, including the eight dollars that I lost, I paid as much for one pretty much like it."

"I did not know that another of the sort was to be had."

"Oh, yes; Madame D—— brought forward another, intending it for a raffle, but I persuaded her to let me take it off her hands, for I could not have borne to miss the second, and, after seeing the two, to have had to put up with one of an inferior quality. Some would have preferred mine to the first; it is of cream-coloured cashmere, embroidered as richly as the finest Canton crape shawl, and

lined with a delicate blue satin, of which the quilting is almost as close as that of a Marseilles counterpane. You can't imagine how sweet the baby looks in it. The little fellow is asleep, but I will have his cloak brought down, and also his satin cap, which has excited the envy of many of my friends."

Mrs. Fenwick then rang the bell, and after ordering the girl who appeared to send down the baby's cloak and white satin cap, she directed that little Georgy should be dressed in readiness to receive company in the nursery.

"Be particular to arrange his curls so that they will look as well as this little boy's," she added, impressively.

The cloak was brought and was contemplated with due comment by Miss Dexter, who was scarcely less eloquent upon the cap.

"What do you think I paid for it at Madame D——'s?" asked Mrs. Fenwick.

"I have never seen one like it, and could not venture to guess."

"Seven dollars and a half without the feathers, and those little ostrich tips were a dollar a-piece, in addition. It cost me a great deal for feathers for my children this winter. I got a set like those for Ellen Ann, and Georgy had to have a long one for his new beaver. In the early part of the season, he wore a velvet cap like Master Willy's, but the fashion changed, and I got him a hat. He occasionally wears his cap, though, still, particularly when he is about home. It is very pretty and becoming, though not of so bright a colour as Willy's!"

"His was a present, ma'am, from his Uncle William," remarked Hester. "Mrs. Dunham says she would not have bought one so showy and expensive."

The baby growing restless, Hester walked with it into the next room, and Mrs. Fenwick, who by this time had examined every article comeatable in the children's attire, remarked to Miss Dexter—

"Mrs. Dunham seems to pursue a system quite the opposite to mine, and I suppose each of us thinks her own the better. For my part, I acknowledge I like to see my children beautifully and richly dressed. It is easy to teach them that their manners should comport with their appearance, and, when their clothing is elegant, that they must do nothing to disgrace it. It gives them a proper feeling of self-respect, so that they can have no awkward fear of showing themselves anywhere; and besides, the style in which children have generally appeared is remembered long after they have become men and women. However exalted their future fortunes may be, if remembered for certain refinements of dress, their dignity will be enhanced, and quite the contrary if otherwise. My mother has sometimes spoken of having known Judge M—— as 'a little bare-foot boy,' and though his family is good enough, I cannot help feeling towards him as if he were an upstart. No one shall ever feel thus towards my children if I can pre-

I have made up my mind always to dress them to the extent of my ability. For the same reason, I have had their portraits taken in that elaborate style. You observe, Ellen Ann is in white satin and thread lace, with little white kid gloves on her hands, and amethyst bracelets and necklace for ornaments; and that Georgy is holding his gold watch to his ear, with the chain over his shoulders, and that his little gold-headed cane is projecting from under his arm. Many persons think that in pictures children should be dressed in the simplest and most negligent style, but my idea is that these portraits will be preserved, and that the originals, if they should meet with reverses of fortune, will feel a melancholy pleasure in looking at them, and reflecting that they can never be called *parvenus*."

A message from the nursery now apprised Mrs. Fenwick that the children were ready; and Miss Dexter, as well as the others, was invited to go up stairs to see the baby. To see the nursery was really the object of the invitation, for its siting up was as much a matter of ostentation as the dress of its little occupants. Its furniture was of the richest kind, and equally so was that of the chamber adjoining, which contained a handsome French bed for the nursery maids, and cribs, elegantly curtained, for the children. These were all supplied with beautifully fine linen, frilled and fluted, which, from its freshness, had evidently been brought out for the occasion.

"I observe you allow your children curtains," remarked Miss Dexter; "you do not seem to regard the opinion that they are injurious to health."

"I am not philosopher enough to understand how they can do any damage, and as I am determined that my children shall be accustomed to the elegancies of life, they must have curtains, even if it should be at a sacrifice. You know how the English ridicule our rude, unfurnished beds."

A little child was standing, fresh from his tire-woman's hands, in the middle of the floor, looking, from his fantastical costume, like a dwarf Cossack. At the approach of the Dunhams, he jerked himself backward from them until he stumbled over a little velvet rocking chair, and then his screams put a check to the conversation for several minutes. He was silenced for the time by the entrance of his sister, who now returned from her promenade, and who bore in her hands two large toys.

"Here, Georgy," said she, "I bought you an elephant—this chimbley-sweep is mine."

"Give me the chimbley-sweep," said Georgy, peremptorily.

"I won't; take your own or you sha'n't have any," answered the sister, in the same tone.

"Hush, daughter," interposed the mother; "you know the money was to be spent equally between you. Is that all you got for your dollar?"

"You couldn't expect, ma'am, to get two such things for less than a dollar," said the nursery maid, sauntering into the other room, and placing her walking apparel in a fashionable wardrobe.

"I have always to give my children money to purchase toys while they are out walking," remarked Mrs. Fenwick to Miss Dexter. "Bina says that if they have none, they will stop before the shop windows, and she might as well attempt to move mountains as to get them away. And nothing less than a dollar will suffice each time. Indeed, I begin of late to suspect that it does not all go for toys, but I should not like Bina to know of my suspicions, for she is a capital nurse; she can dress them with perfect taste, and, besides, she is able to teach them to say many things in French."

During this interlude, the two children were wrangling about the toys—the baby, as babies will, squalling in chorus; even the Dunham No. 3 joining in—and in vain the mother attempted to negotiate a peace. At length, upon Georgy's snatching the chimney-sweep and dashing the elephant to atoms, Ellen Ann laid hands on him, and grasped a little velvet cap which was tied carefully upon his head. The strings gave way, and, to the surprise of the uninitiated spectators, a garland of long curls, which had encircled his head and face, departed with the cap, leaving him in possession alone of a scanty crop of hair, so short that the little belligerent could with difficulty grasp a sufficient length to accomplish the premeditated tweak.

Little Willy Dunham walked forward, looking with mingled compassion and consternation from the dismantled head to the capful of curls, and then exclaimed to Ellen Ann—

"Ain't you a wicked girl to pull all your brother's hair out!"

"Who are you? What are you, I say?" retorted Ellen Ann, turning round upon him with a stare of utter scorn and indignation; and sturdily marching towards him, she grasped his ringlets in turn. They proved to be more tenacious than her brother's, but before she could enjoy the discovery to the extent she desired, she was carried kicking from the room. Lizzy Dunham had screamed with terror at the menaced danger of her brother, and, with a view to pacify her, Mrs. Fenwick had brought to her the French hat which Ellen Ann had dashed on the floor.

"Just look at the pretty bonnet, darling," said she; "let me take off your little gimp and try it on. Look, Miss Dexter; look nurse, what a little beauty. Mustn't mamma buy her just such a pretty bonnet? Seriously, it does make her look quite a different creature. Mrs. Dunham does not do justice to her children by dressing them in that plain way, and I must tell her so the first time I see her. Look at yourself in the glass, darling. Did you ever see such a beautiful little girl? Mamma would hardly know her own little daughter, if she saw her dressed so prettily."

The child nodded her head, and made mouths before the glass in evident admiration of herself; and Hester, seeing that no good was likely to result from the visit, would protract it no longer, much as Mrs. Fenwick urged her to stay until Ellen Ann

should be restored to good humour. She had scarcely reached the street before the consequences she had apprehended manifested themselves. Little Lizzy, who had preceded her to the door, threw her bonnet upon the pavement, and stamping *a la* Ellen Ann, exclaimed—

"I won't wear that nasty bonnet; I want a new one with lace and flowers. I want to be a little beauty! I will be dressed in pretty clothes!"

With much persuasion, the nurse prevailed upon her to resume the despised bonnet; and after she had done so, was obliged to seat herself on a door step to tie it, while holding the baby.

"Now be a good girl," said she, "and come on."

"I won't," returned Lizzy; "I won't go till you get me a chimney-sweep."

"Then you must stay here in the street," said Hester, "and your brothers will come with me."

"Stop—stop, Hester, Willy!" cried the child, frightened at the thought of being deserted; "I'll go if you'll get me an elephant."

No notice being taken of her proposed compromise, she followed in pouting silence, while Hester made many sage reflections to herself upon the ease with which the precepts of years are overruled by a single hour of evil communication.

The next visit was to Mrs. Brice and her sister, Miss Patty Carey, two old ladies who, by their fondness for children, had instituted their house as a rendezvous for those of the whole circle of their acquaintance. Our party was shown up stairs to the common sitting-room, and received with loud acclamations by Miss Patty. She was a tall, thin, sallow personage, looking very spectral in a long, white dressing-gown and a large white turban of exceedingly queer construction. She had, also, a very harsh voice; and the children, with something of apprehension, shrank from her caresses and gladly sought refuge with Mrs. Brice, who, being plump and smiling and well-dressed, was much more prepossessing.

"What pretty creatures they are!" exclaimed the latter; "the living images of Mr. Dunham!"

"Mr. Dunham, indeed! I wonder where your eyes be, Sally!" responded her sister; "they are their mother from top to toe."

"Why, yes; after looking more closely, I believe the girl does resemble her mother strikingly."

"It is the boy who is most like her. You never will learn to distinguish likenesses. The boy is just what Mary Dunham was at his age, and I think he is much prettier than his sister. He should have been the girl, he is so much better looking."

Upon this, Lizzy hung her head and impatiently kicked her chair.

Mrs. Brice winked towards her, and remarked, soothingly—"They are both pretty. Lizzy is a beautiful little girl, and every body loves her as well as her brother. Don't you, nurse—and doesn't her mamma?"

"Yes, ma'am, when she is as good; but to-day

she does not behave as well as Willy, and no one can like her looks or love her as well."

The child hung her head still lower, and Miss Patty, to make amends for her offence, took her on her knee to amuse her. After repeating a series of renowned melodies, such as "Jack and Gill went up a hill," and "Sing a song—a sixpence," she asked her—

"Now, shall I tell you how old you are?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Lizzy.

"Then open your mouth till I look at your teeth."

She was obeyed, and chucking the chin suddenly, poor Lizzy's tongue was sadly bitten by her sharp little teeth. She cried with the pain, and Miss Patty seemed to consider it a capital joke.

"Poor little girl!" said Mrs. Brice, compassionately. "I do wish, sister, I could get you to give up that trick. I shall have to get something good to cure the little mouth."

She hastened from the room, and, in a few minutes, returned with a large tray full of plum-cake, gingerbread, raisins, lemon-drops, and even a quantity of dried peaches and cherries.

"Come, now," said she, "sit up to this little table, both of you, and eat as much as you are able. Nurse, couldn't the baby eat some gingerbread or suck a few lemon-drops?"

"You are very kind, ma'am," said Hester, anxiously; "but their mother never allows any of them things of the kind. She gives them none but the plainest food."

"Nonsense," said Miss Patty, loudly; "we never encourage these new-fashioned notions about feeding children. We have seen too many children, in our time, grow up on the old plan, to give way to such absurdities. When the little things come to see us, we make them enjoy themselves: and what pleasure can they have equal to eating? Come on, dears; don't be a bit afraid—we'll settle with your mamma about it, one of these days."

The children were, of course, not inclined to resist this strenuous encouragement, and soon applied themselves with much appetite to the tempting fare. Their nurse regarded them with uneasiness during the progress of the feast, but saw, from the authoritative firmness with which her hints were combated by the old ladies, that it was vain to attempt withdrawing them from it. At length they voluntarily left the table; and while Mrs. Brice busied herself with Lizzy and the baby, Miss Patty undertook the entertainment of Willy. She asked him if he had ever played "Is the crow at home?" and on being answered in the negative, she arranged, by crossing her fingers, what she called a trap; then after directing him to put one of his into it, she pinched it sharply with her nails. She then produced a box, on the lid of which she laid some sugar that he was to take off. As he did so, a hideous little figure started out, and scattered a pinch of snuff against his face, which set him to sneezing, and caused his eyes to smart severely. She then asked him "if he wished to see London?"

and lifted him from the floor by the ears, to the danger of his neck and the alarm of his watchful nurse.

After all these exploits, to which Willy submitted so manfully as to elicit high commendations of his fortitude from Miss Patty, she asked him, with a view to test his courage, if he was afraid of "Giant Grim, who tears little boys from limb to limb?"

"No, ma'am," replied Willy; "he never comes to our house."

"And did you never see old Raw-head-and-bloody-bones?"

"No, ma'am."

"Are you afraid to be in the dark?"

"No, ma'am; for if any thing wanted to hurt me, it couldn't see me in the dark," was the philosophic answer.

"Would you like to see a fairy?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, I'll go into that room, and whenever I rap on the door, you must come in and you'll see one."

She then retired to her chamber, which opened from the sitting-room, and, in a few minutes, the signal was heard. Mrs. Brice, laughing heartily, instructed him to obey it, and he walked boldly to the door, which was closed after him. Hester heard a rapid scampering about the room, and then a loud scream from Willy. Mrs. Brice told her not to be frightened, that it was all fun, but permitted her to open the door softly and look in. The chamber was darkened, but not too much so to prevent her from discerning an odd apparition dancing about the floor, which proved to be Miss Patty, with the skirt of her dress thrown upward from the waist, and distended, like a sail, above her head by her very long arms. From the interior of this could be distinguished a suppressed chuckle, which indicated that she, at least, found amusement in the performance. But Willy stood sobbing in the middle of the apartment, and it was discovered that, in the chase by the fairy, he had struck his head against the bed-post. Mrs. Brice led him out to console him, and Miss Patty, after she had readjusted her habiliments to a more familiar aspect, took full part in making reparation for the injury, which was a swelling of considerable magnitude on his forehead. She insisted that he should have an extra supply of plum-cake, which, as it could not be refused, Hester advised him to preserve in his pocket. She then proposed taking leave, and both the old ladies, expressing their gratification from the visit, entrusted her with a message to Mrs. Dunham, the purport of which was, that they would take it as a kindness if the children were sent to them at least once a week.

The effect of the unusual quantity and quality of the food they had taken showed itself, before long, in the lagging steps and listless countenances of the little people; but there were still other visits to make, and their nurse conducted them to the dwelling of Mrs. Colgar. The dictatorial address and

self-appropriating manners of this lady, a large, masculine person, with hollow, gray eyes and very thin lips, at once announced her intellectual pretensions. She, indeed, eschewed the reputation of being literary, but was very tenacious of the title of "a superior woman." She considered herself perfectly *au fait* to the most improved methods of bringing up children, and was, therefore, much deferred to by her acquaintances who had not bestowed upon the subject an equal degree of study. She was occupied with one of these when our party entered, and summarily allotting them seats, she resumed her discourse.

"In my concluding paragraph," she said, taking up a manuscript from the open desk at which she was sitting, "I have made an appeal directly to females in the relation to which we ourselves belong. 'On you, mothers of the land, devolves this noble and lofty task. The time is here when you may cease to be the mere nourishers of the bodies of your children—of the elements that perish, and may lay the foundation of an intellectual superstructure which will endure for ages. The nation's destiny is in your hands; you may make it one in which each individual will be a statesman, an orator, a philosopher, a poet—a nation such as the world has never seen, such as was never conceived of by the most enlightened imagination of the past. Why should you shrink from the effort? Regard it as a solemn duty to exert the power with which nature has endowed you, and your influence will become a tremendous engine which shall control the world!'"

"It is very fine, very eloquent, indeed," said her auditrice, a Mrs. Dewer; "but all women have not your talents and energy, Mrs. Colgar. You certainly intend that spirited article for circulation, do you not?"

"I did intend it as an address to our Education Society," replied Mrs. Colgar, complacently folding her manuscript; "but as we have disorganized, I think I shall have it inserted in one of the magazines devoted to the subject—that is, my friends advise me to do so. For myself, I generally avoid much publicity, if possible, as I consider that my exertions may be more effective if concentrated upon a certain limited sphere."

"I heard, some weeks ago, that your society was dissolved, but could not ascertain the cause. I presume there is no objection to my knowing it?"

"Certainly not, as you are a particular friend, though we do not make it a subject of common conversation. Several causes operated, but the root of all was the admission of some members who had not sufficiently trained themselves for our requisitions. Such an association should be composed exclusively of females of a high order of mind, who would be prepared to sacrifice their private feelings for the public good, and would have the discretion to guard the affairs of each other as scrupulously as their own. That we had some of a different character among us was first proven by the non-observance of a law of vast im-

portance, which required that if we discovered any moral or mental infirmity, whatever it might be, in any of our children, we should submit it for consideration at one of the *conversazioni*, so that we might have the benefit of assistance for its extermination from the united judgment and experience of all the members."

"I can perceive how difficult it must have been to observe such a regulation," remarked Mrs. Dewer, "for mothers to expose the foibles of their little ones, and have punishments devised for them by persons who could have no personal sympathy with them."

"With weak women it might have been difficult, Mrs. Dewer," responded Mrs. Colgar, with a look that insinuated Mrs. Dewer to be a weak woman; "but, as I said before, each should have been ready to overcome any reluctance she might have felt in consideration of the light which was to be afforded her by a general discussion."

"I have heard something of a disagreeable occurrence in which Mrs. Thomas Headly was involved," observed Mrs. Dewer.

"It was, indeed, an unpleasant affair, and the immediate cause of our dissolution, which, however, I hope is to be but temporary. Mrs. Headly was, certainly, one of the most enthusiastic and influential members of the association, and had my warmest sympathy. In order to encourage a timid member to relate a case of juvenile delinquency which had transpired in her family, she set an example by reporting one which had, a few days before, come under her own experience. In her eloquent and polished style, she lamented that her daughter—that is, her husband's daughter; you, no doubt, remember little Maria Headly, an exceedingly thoughtless and ungovernable child—had manifested a disposition to appropriate to herself the property of others, specifying, as an instance, her having abstracted a gold chain from her (Mrs. Headly's) wardrobe."

"She could not have done it, Mrs. Colgar, if little Maria had been her own child! Had one of mine been guilty of such an act, I would have chastised her, pleaded, reasoned with her—prayed for her; but I could not in that manner have exposed her depravity."

"Permit me," said Mrs. Colgar, waving her hand: "Mrs. Headly, merely through the refinement of her language, was misunderstood by some of the company, and one of them, Mrs. Brentford, was imprudent enough to enter into a private conversation with another about it, in the presence of her own daughter, expressing, in her coarse way, her horror of a child that had a thieving propensity, and regretting that she had not asked whether Mrs. Headly had recovered the chain. The conversation was repeated the next day at school, no doubt with exaggeration, by the little girl, and the consequence was, I am told, quite a scene, the teachers being obliged to interfere."

"That was the point about which I was particularly informed," interposed Mrs. Dewer. "Little

Maria was almost frantic with distress, and the next morning Mr. Headly went to the principal and demanded permission to make an explanation before the whole school. He emphatically denied the culpability of his daughter, stating that, on the occasion in question, she had wished, through a childish vanity, to have some ornament to wear at an examination fête, and that Mrs. Headly, not being at home to furnish her with what she desired, she had supplied herself with the chain, neither attempting secrecy nor conscious of impropriety. He remarked, as his reason for interposing so openly in what appeared a very trifling matter, that the character borne in childhood is often remembered to the advantage or injury of an individual in after life, and that he could not be satisfied to know that of his daughter tainted with the suspicion of a vice so disgraceful."

"Mr. Headly is a very ordinary man," said Mrs. Colgar; "his conduct grieved his wife exceedingly, and caused her immediate withdrawal. In consequence, too, of his imprudent interference, the husbands of several other members insisted on their abandoning the association, and, with the reduction of our number, the meetings so decreased in interest that it was no longer desirable to hold them."

"I am afraid our human nature is too imperfect to allow such a system to work very smoothly," observed Mrs. Dewer; and as Mrs. Colgar seemed to disdain an argument, she asked, to change the subject—"How do your little girls proceed in their studies?—so rapidly, I suppose, that it will soon be beyond my ability to understand their recitations?"

"Their attainments are, I believe, unusual to children so young, though not sufficiently so to satisfy my wishes. There is nothing like disciplining the mind from the earliest infancy. It is contrary to my theory to make an exhibition of their knowledge, but as you are a particular friend, and a young mother desirous of investigating the merits of different systems, I shall call them down, and give you a few specimens of their exercises. You can have no idea of how frequently I am called upon to do it. Charlotte, I am obliged to confess, is now in confinement for failing in her trigonometrical lesson, but the younger two are at liberty. They ought, indeed, to have been down before now, to make acquaintance with these little strangers, but I was so much interested in your conversation—" She then rang the bell, and gave orders that the children should be summoned.

"You would be quite surprised," continued Mrs. Colgar, "at the taste they evince for classical studies. Lucia, though but six years old or a little better, is perfectly mistress of the three first declensions of Latin nouns, and Jane, who is but five, can repeat the whole Greek alphabet, and is entirely familiar with ten of the characters."

Mrs. Dewer expressed her astonishment, and the children entered—two pallid, meagre little creatures, with dull, sunken eyes, prominent foreheads, and their scanty hair cropped close to their disproportionately large heads. They looked vacantly at

the little Dunhams, and then repeated, monotonously, after their mother, the salutations proper for the reception of their visitors. They were immediately called to their recitations, and, in parrot-like voices, the elder ran through her declensions, and the younger through her Alpha, Beta, Gamma, to the proper delight and edification of Mrs. Dewer, who regretted her own want of classical acquirements.

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Colgar, "little Master Dunham can take his turn with you in answering scientific questions;" and Willy was directed to come forward, looking very much puzzled to know what was to be done with him. "Now, Jane, tell us to which of the natural kingdoms that pier-glass belongs?"

"The mineral and vegetable—the glass, mineral; the gilding of the frame, mineral, and the wood, vegetable," answered Jane, glibly.

"What is a mineral, Lucia?"

"A substance without life or organization, found on or under the surface of the earth."

"Now, Master Dunham, of what substance is this pen?"

"Feathers," said Willy.

"Animal substance," corrected Jane.

"And your merino dress, Jane?"

"Animal."

"Why, Lucia?"

"Because it is manufactured from the hairy covering of a quadruped, of the family *ovis*, called in English a sheep."

After this display of learning had been continued for some minutes, it was given up through pity for Willy Dunham, who discredited himself more and more by his invariably unscientific answers, and who, on being released from his examination, manifested his satisfaction by offering to one of the little girls the cake which he had brought in his pocket. Mrs. Colgar intercepted it, with an exclamation of—"Trash! poison! I am glad to perceive, my dears, that you have been so obedient to my prohibition and shown no inclination to accept it. There are few children, I believe, Mrs. Dewer, that have not been indulged sometimes in the deleterious compounds devised in such variety to pamper the appetite, yet I have been so vigilant, that mine, I can confidently assert, would not be able to distinguish the taste of one from that of another."

"Those are uncommonly fine children," remarked Mrs. Dewer, looking admiringly at the Dunhams.

"Physically they are," returned Mrs. Colgar; "yet I fear that the more precious part is already allowed to run to waste. Mrs. Dunham is not yet fully awakened, I should judge, to the vital importance of infantile tuition. Oh! how early should the seeds of knowledge be sown! When will mothers devote themselves with their whole hearts to the momentous charge of developing the minds instead of gratifying the palates and adorning the persons of their offspring?" and she glanced at Willy's pretty cap and at the rejected cake, which he was again depositing in his pocket.

Hester now arose to go, and the little girls were informed that they might attend their visitors to the door, and should then return to the school-room.

"Give my compliments to Mrs. Dunham," said Mrs. Colgar, "and say that I will call in a few days and bring her a new treatise, which will greatly assist her in commencing the education of her children."

The parlour door had scarcely closed after them, when Jane, seizing the arm of Willy, demanded, in a sharp but suppressed tone—"Where's the cake mother wouldn't let me have? Give it here, and she won't know any thing about it."

Willy complied, and Lucia sprang forward to snatch it.

"Give me some," said she; "I'll have the biggest piece, for you kept most all the candy we bought with the pence we took from mother's work-box."

"I won't give you any, for you got all the marmalade old Lizo sneaked from the store-room."

Upon this refusal, her arm was grasped by her sister and pinched so violently that no child except one well trained to concealment could have borne an outcry. Lucia possessed herself of a piece of the cake, and with clenched teeth and flashing eyes they looked at each other, deliberating what to do next, when the two ladies were heard approaching from the parlour. Instantaneously, they resumed their former dull, quiet expression, and hiding their booty under their aprons, received demurely the parting salutations of Mrs. Dewer.

The last lady named by Mrs. Dunham, a Mrs. Towson, lived on their direct way home, and at her house Hester again sent in the name of her trio. They had waited but a few moments in the passage, when Mrs. Towson herself made her appearance.

"Well, nurse, you have brought the little things at last," said she; "I am glad of it. I watched for them all day yesterday, and also this morning, and began to fear that Mrs. Dunham's courage had failed her. Bring them after me to the nursery. Poor children—it seems like betraying them into trouble, but we can't look for them to be exempt from the evils that belong to our nature, and the sooner they pass through them the better."

At a loss to understand her, Hester followed her up stairs to the nursery, and on entering, observed a little child lying in the middle of the floor, coughing so violently that his mouth was covered with foam, and his bloodshot eyes seemed starting from his head.

"Has he the hooping-cough," she inquired, apprehensively.

"Yes; he is the only one that has it now, and his fits of coughing are less severe than they have been. It is more important, however, that you should see the girls immediately; the rash is going off the elder ones, but it is still out finely on the baby. Come and kiss the little sick children—won't you, dears?"

Hester had by this time perceived the red and

implied faces of two little girls, tossing about in a trundle bed, and, in the arms of a nurse, that of a still redder baby.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said she, "but I wouldn't for the world have brought them where they could catch either the hooping-cough or measles. Mrs. Dunham has such a dread of both;" and she was about to make a precipitate retreat.

"Stop—stop, nurse," called Mrs. Towson; "is it possible that Mrs. Dunham did not apprise you of the object of your errand here? I met her a few days ago in the street, when the measles were just appearing among my children, and suggested that she should send hers down for the benefit of contagion, as it is so much better that these necessary diseases should come on in the spring than at any other season."

"There must have been some misunderstanding, ma'am," returned Hester, anxiously. "Mrs. Dunham told me that she had seen you, and that you had kindly given her an invitation for the children; and also she said that some of yours had been indisposed—but I think she could not have understood what was the matter with them, or she would have mentioned it;" and she hurried her little charges through the door.

"Of course, you are justifiable in not staying with them if she did not order it," said Mrs. Towson, coolly; "yet I cannot help saying that I think it very singular I should have made so little impression on Mrs. Dunham, while I was showing so much interest for her children, and so much inclination to lighten her cares by explaining to her the proper method of treating them during illness. I have so large a family that my experience should be worth something to a young mother. And that my conversation did make but little impression, is evident to me through your uneasiness, for I know that in all that relates to her children, she has so much confidence in you that she would have told you something about the matter."

The truth was, that when stopped on the specified occasion in the street, Mrs. Dunham, who had set out shopping, was so much engaged in deliberating, within herself, upon French chintz and mousseline de laine for wearing apparel, that she could attend to but few of Mrs. Towson's communications; and afterwards she merely recollected the apparent solicitude with which that lady had urged an early call from her children.

Hester, who had been much embarrassed what answer to make, now hastened home, and lost no time in revealing what she regarded as the disastrous finale of her afternoon's round. Mrs. Dunham was seriously discomposed, for, like most mothers, she had always been anxious to defer the evil hour of disease as long as possible; but the danger could not now be averted, and she spoke of it as calmly as she was able. The children were

offered their usual supper of bread and milk, but the indulgence they had received from Miss Patty and Mrs. Brice had spoiled their appetite for such simple fare, and they were prepared for bed. Whilst undressing the baby, Hester gave Mrs. Dunham a conscientious detail of their adventures; and though the mother made no comments, excepting to express her fears of the result of their overfeeding, and to repeat her regret for their admission into the infected atmosphere of Mrs. Towson's nursery, she felt that she had no reason to triumph in the success of her progeny.

After tea, the sociable Miss Dexter came in to spend the evening.

"Were your little folks much fatigued from their walk?" she asked; and added—"I cannot forbear to tell you that I was on thorns about them all the afternoon, and to advise you, as a sincere friend, to be careful to what places you send them visiting. I happened to encounter them in several houses, and had a fair opportunity to decide upon the amount of attachment which certain persons bear towards you."

Mrs. Dunham prudently made an effort to escape any particulars, but the subject was one of too much value to her guest to be easily abandoned. In addition to what Hester had overheard, she repeated that Mrs. Hallowell remarked, with her majestic air, that she did not think Mrs. Dunham could be very well up to society to be guilty of the bad taste of sending her children for exhibition to people who could have no possible interest in them.

"I was not so much surprised at Mrs. Hallowell," continued Miss Dexter, "as I was at a speech of Mrs. Fenwick's. You and she have been intimate from your girlhood, and I really thought you might rely on her friendship, yet after the children had gone, she observed slyly that she was under the impression something was wrong with Mr. Dunham's affairs, from the fact of his children's being dressed with such scrupulous economy. I also stepped for a few minutes to see Mrs. Towson on my way here. She seemed quite short when I spoke about you, though for what reason she did not explain, as she was very busy with her sick youngsters. She, however, took occasion to observe that you had sent yours to see her in the afternoon. She could not imagine for what reason, unless it was to get them off your own hands for a while. 'Mrs. Dunham,' she said, 'could hardly have supposed I required their company for my amusement. When I need any thing of that kind, I have seven of my own to supply it to me.'"

"It was the first visiting expedition of my children," said Mrs. Dunham, quietly, "and before you came in I had made up my mind it should be their last."

A FANCY SKETCH.

BY MRS VOLNEY K. HOWARD.

"My mother had a maid called Barbara."—*Othello*.

I PRAY you lend me your fancies—I wave my wand once—twice—thrice—hundreds of times, and Venice, beautiful Sea Queen! rises before us like the Faia Morgana. Lo! we stand on the canal Maggiore—what stately buildings border it on either side! The Venetians were wont to boast, that on the canal Maggiore were two hundred palaces, each fit for the residence of a crowned king.

Restricted by their severe sumptuary laws, from the display of gold jewels or gorgeous attire, the opulent nobles of Venice could only exhibit their wealth in the splendour of their buildings. How directly in contrast with the customs of the Venetian Jew. Whilst in the palace of the merchant-prince, the sombre cast of their garments gave to its inmates more the appearance of *religieux* than the gay, rich nobles of the land, in the outwardly squalid dwelling of the Jew, its inhabitants were decked with all those gaudy, as well as rich adornments, which always characterized the taste of the women of Israel. But with them we have at present nought to do.

See yonder magnificent mansion! It is the palace of Senor Brabantio, the noble Senator. That dwelling contains a rare beauty—the fair, the chaste, the gentle Desdemona. Wouldst thou behold her, even as she used to sit amid the maidens of her mother's household, superintending their light avocations and passing the hours in innocent converse? Look!

The sun streams pleasantly into the cheerful chamber, where, employed in embroidery, cut-work, and many a fine needlework beside, of which we now know but the name, sat the damsels of the noble lady of Brabantio. One sits among them, a being of superior order, evidenced not only by her more costly attire, but by her noble, yet delicate beauty. She leans over a frame of rich embroidery; but the rose-bud on which she has been working has grown none for the last ten minutes, for those taper fingers which are so rarely painting it with the needle, have for that space of time supported the dimpled chin of their sweet owner.

The pretty Olivia, looking archly at her young lady, laughed out, "I would wager a golden crown to a steel bodkin, that I can guess on what the Lady Desdemona is pondering just now!"

"And if thou canst, girl," said the lady, awaking from her reverie, "thou shalt have the Genoa bodice that I know thou covetest. Nay, nay, do not speak till I whisper my thought to Barbara, and then thou shalt tell thy guess!"

So saying, she bent to the ear of a maiden somewhat older than Olivia, whose pale, sad countenance, but for the gloom that shadowed it, would have been very fair, and, whispering a few words, resumed aloud, "Now speak, Olivia! what busied my truant thoughts, just now?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the eager girl, "were you not thinking of the sweet serenade that was sung beneath your window last night? I can give a shrewd guess, too, at the singer!"

"Lost! lost! has she not, Barbara?" cried the gay lady. "In sooth, my fancy was busy with loftier things than the roundelays of Senior Roderigo, albeit he hath a passably sweet voice and merry fancy. I mused upon the news my father told us yesternight at supper, that the thanks of the state and a splendid sword are voted to the gallant general, Othello, who hath so nobly deserved them. Ah! 'tis such men as he that *do* the deeds that such as the silken Roderigo can but sing!"

"Oh, lady! you do unkindly to cast such reproach on one who adores the ground your foot but touches! Sure am I, his voice last night might have softened the hardest heart. How went the lay?—(sings)—la la, lira lira!"

"Oh! sing it, if thou canst, Olivia!" cried Helena; "our chamber is distant, and we heard it not. I should so like to hear it, if our lady is willing?" A nod gave assent, and Olivia sung

RODERIGO'S SERENADE.

Awake Desdemona!
Fair lily unstain'd,
Wake, for the nightingale
Thus sadly 'plain'd:
"For bright Desdemona
I sing my sweet lay;
Ah! why does she slumber
Forgetful away?"

"I saw her fair cheek,
And it rival'd the dawn;
I thought 'twas my rose-love,
And flew to the lawn!"
Then wake, Desdemona—
Thou maid without peer—
Let the strains of the nightingale
Melt on thine ear.

"Now, is not that sweet, Barbara? and is not our fair lady cruel to slight such a troubadour? But, Barbara, what was the song thou wast singing the other day, when we were gathering roses for the festival? You said you sang it to warn me! Good,

now—why *me*? and what was it? My lady, bid Barbara sing it—'tis a pretty air."

"Methinks you are song-mad, Olivia; but you shall be indulged for once. Sing it, good Barbara."

"As you please, my lady; but 'tis only a simple thing," sighed the melancholy Barbara, as she sang—

'If thou hast a true, true love,
Lady—sweet lady!
Prize him next to Heaven above,
Oh, lovely lady!

'If thou loseest a hawk or hound,
Lady—sweet lady!
A leash of others soon are found,
Oh, lovely lady!

'If thou loseest a purse of gold,
Lady—sweet lady!
Fate may give thee an hundred fold,
Oh, lovely lady!

'But if thou hast a true love tin'd,
Lady—sweet lady!
Thou mayst never another find,
Oh, careless lady!"

"Thank you for your warning, Barbara," said Desdemona; "but suppose a lady has more than one *true love*, she cannot love them both, but must lose one. Give me my lute, and I will answer thy song with another."

If thou wouldst choose a knight to love,
No matter when or how,
If thou wouldst choose a knight to love,
Under the greenwood bough;

Choose him not by a lily skin,
No matter when or how;
Of fair without proves foul within,
All under the greenwood bough.

But choose him for his heart and mind,
No matter when or how;
For this is true love painted blind,
All under the greenwood bough.

"Heigho! methinks I could love such a man," said Desdemona, musingly.

"Such a man! such a man as who, my lady?" eagerly exclaimed the favourite Olivia, while all paused in their employment to listen.

Desdemona.—Oh, a man that hath more wit in his head than perfumes on his locks, and more strength in his hand than embroidery on his gloves. Few such in Venice! Come hither, Helena; thou touchest the lute with skill; take mine, and sing us a ballad—and let it be of something nobler than nightingales and roses.

Helena.—When I attended your lady mother to Signora Nani's fête, the other day, a minstrel sang one that I think is new. I have been able to recall it all to memory, with the help of my lady's page, who also heard it.

Oh, swiftly glides the gondola
The broad canal along;
Beneath its ample canopy
Is heard the jest and song.

Far from the marble palaces,
Their joyous course they plough;
The queenly Adriatic sea
Is spread before them now.

The heavy folds are drawn aside,
A happy band is there;
The guests of young Valeria,
The lovely, bright and fair.

Her aged sire sits silent by;
His thoughts are far away;
Say, thinks he of his only son,
Lost at fell Ceuta Bay.

And he is now the Moslem's thrall,
A menial overtasked,
Until his sire shall ransom pay—
A cruel one is asked.

The Moor Valeria's portraiture
Had from her brother torn;
To take no ransom but herself
He had by Mah'met sworn.

In vain were offered sums that well
Had princes' ransoms paid;
No ransom would the Moslem take
But the too lovely maid.

Antonio was his father's pride,
His noble house's heir;
Dear though she was, Valeria
Could not with him compare.

The Moor had sworn the Christian maid,
His only bride should be,
And not a queen in all the East,
Should have such state as she.

Alas! for sweet Valeria,
Romano's promised bride,
No longer hath old Bertolo
Th' unhallowed suit denied.

But lest all Christendom should cast
Reproach upon his deed,
That they should seize her as perforce
Was secretly agreed.

On swept the Moorish brigantine,
Loud laughed its brutal crew;
Loudly laughed they that he should deem
They'd keep their promise true.

Upon the deck, oh, joyful sight!
Bertolo sees his son;
But oh, remorse! what frightful price
That vision bright hath won!

When woes are sent from Heaven above,
Strength also comes from there—
But what our own wild wills have done,
Our own weak hearts must bear.

"It is too late!" cried Bertolo.
And yet he clasped his child;
Is this the last time he shall meet
Those eyes of lustre mild?

Oh, who with Moor hath combat made,
That has not met with loss;
For who can trust the infidel
That tramples on the cross?

On sweeps the Moorish brigantine,
Driven by both sail and oar;
Bertolo's gilded gondola
Is far from friendly shore.

They bear on board the bright-eyed maids,
They seize the gray-haired sire,
In vain, in vain the maiden's shrieks—
In vain Bertolo's ire.

But ever spotless maiden's prayers
The bright Madonna hears,
And towards them then, with force divine,
Their rescuers brave she bears.

Romano heard, with wonder wild,
The tale that Paulo told;
His foster-brother from the Moor
Just ransomed by his gold.

With terror's haste before the Ten
The treacherous plan he laid,
And soon a vessel of the state
His will with zeal obeyed.

Ave Maria! strengthen now
The Christian rowers' arms,
And strike with those who fight to save
The Christian maiden's charms.

All hail, Maria! see how swift
Romano's vessel flies,
And, ere the morn, by that false bark
The fierce avenger lies.

Beneath Romano's love-nerved arm
Full many a Moslem sinks,
And of false Moorish blood that day
Deeply his good sword drinks.

And fiercely fought the infidel—
Before the fight was past,
The deck was strewn with turbaned dead,
But they must yield at last.

How blest was brave Romano then,
When, clasping to his heart,
His bride, his sweet Valeria,
He swore no more to part.

Oh, stately Venice! thee no more
Shall old Bertolo view,
Nor reach the sea-washed palace hall
Where he from childhood grew.

Wounded to death by Christian sword,
A Moor, with vengeance dire,
Fought where in bonds the captives lay,
And fiercely smote the sire.

"Weep not, my children, for my shame
Will die when I am dead,
But, in the church of good St. Mark,
Let many a mass be said."

EPITOME OF ASTRONOMY.

BY REV. GEORGE WATERMAN, JR.

ONE of the great objects to be attained in the pursuit of any science, is the development and strengthening of the various powers of the mind. If with this we can combine the highest possible pleasure, we have attained the acme of terrestrial happiness. With these in view, there is, perhaps, no one so worthy of our attentive consideration as the science of astronomy. Other sciences are connected directly with earth—they have their source and centre here. But this, disdaining to be confined by terrestrial limits, claims as its appropriate sphere the regions of space—selecting worlds and systems as the subjects of its dominion, and not resting contented while one refractory orb refuses to transmit a copy of its constitution and laws to the seat of universal empire.

The starry firmament—the field of astronomical research—is an object of universal admiration to the learned and the illiterate, the old and the young. The child has often

“—————paused at set of sun
To gaze upon the golden sky,
And view the stars, as one by one
They deck the coronet on high.”

The poet has caught new inspiration while beholding

“Their mystic dance
O’er heaven’s imperial pavement.”

And the philosopher has had his mind strengthened, his feelings elevated, and his heart improved, while viewing those same sources from which the pure, perennial fountains of pleasure send forth their cooling streams to refresh the wearied mind. The heavenly bodies afford an ever-varying, but never-failing source of delight, whether we contemplate them as “diamonds sparkling in the noon of night,” or as worlds, the residence of pure, ethereal intelligences, or of beings like ourselves. For we cannot suppose that the Great Creator would have formed so many and of such vast dimensions as we know some of these to be, and then left them without any inhabitants to witness his glory and to be the happy recipients of his goodness. But how little do we *know* of these things! The human mind, with all its pride of intellect, here finds itself compelled to yield to superior wisdom, and acknowledge its own weakness and insufficiency.

In the study of astronomy, the first great subject to which our attention is directed, is the solar system, consisting of eleven primaries, which, with their secondaries, or satellites, eighteen in number, revolve around the sun as their common centre. The following beautiful miniature representation

of the solar system, as given by Sir John Herschell, may aid our conception and assist in investing the whole with the confidence of reality. “Represent the *Sun* by a globe of two feet in diameter. *Mercury* will be represented by a grain of mustard seed on the circumference of a circle 164 feet in diameter for its orbit; *Venus*, a pea on a circle 284 feet in diameter; *the Earth*, also, a pea on a circle 430 feet; *Mars*, a rather large size pin’s head on a circle of 654 feet; *Juno*, *Ceres*, *Vesta* and *Pallas*. grains of sand in orbits of from 1000 to 1200 feet; *Jupiter*, a moderate size orange on a circle nearly half a mile across; *Saturn*, a small size orange on a circle four-fifths of a mile; and *Uranus*, a full size cherry or small plum upon the circumference of a circle more than a mile and a half.” Such is the relative view of the solar system as presented in miniature. But if we change the ball of two feet in diameter into one of 882,000 miles in diameter, or into a body 1,384,472 times larger than the earth, and make the corresponding changes in the other numbers, we shall have some correct idea of the comprehensive whole. How vast a field for investigation! What mind so capacious as to take in the whole at a single view, or fully comprehend any one of the parts! Even of the planet which we inhabit, we know but little compared with the vast amount which remains unknown. A few interesting facts have been ascertained concerning our nearest neighbour, the Moon. The laws of gravitation, which have since been found to govern the entire system, and even to extend their influence to other systems, were first proved by observation with reference to her. Of the moon’s physical condition we know but little. Mountains checker the surface, the highest of which, as ascertained by their shadows, are about one mile and three-quarters high. But no clouds are found to cast their delightful shade over her diversified surface during the short but burning summer of two weeks’ duration, or to moisten the parched soil after the excessive heat of that short but constantly recurring period. From this fact, it has been supposed that no atmosphere surrounds her capable of supporting *human* life. If we pass from the moon to other members of our system, we find greater obstacles and fewer facilities for investigations of this character. Their relative distances, densities and magnitudes have been determined. The elements of their orbits are also known. Beyond these we know comparatively nothing. Yet these are abundantly sufficient to demonstrate the existence of some of the general laws of nature—laws which are as immutable as

the system which they regulate, and which prove, most conclusively, that the great Author of the universe has not left his works to the control of blind chance, but manifests the same power in their government as was exhibited in their creation.

Vast as is the field already glanced at, yet we are not confined in our investigations to such narrow limits. By the aid of powerful instruments, we are not only enabled to leave the earth but also the system of which it forms a part. Other *systems* have been discovered, and their motions and periodic times ascertained with considerable certainty. These are generally composed of two bodies, revolving around their common centre of gravity, and apparently subject to the same general laws which regulate the members of the solar system. About forty such systems of binary stars have been investigated and their motions determined, some requiring a period of no less than 1200 years to complete a single revolution, while others perform it in the comparatively short space of forty-three years—a period only little more than half that occupied by Uranus in describing its orbit around the sun. Here we are not dealing with *planets*, but with *suns*—each, perhaps, the centre of a system of planetary worlds concealed from us only by their great distance and the intense and united light of their respective centres.

Some of these binary stars exhibit the beautiful phenomena of contrasted or complimentary colours.

“Other suns, perhaps,

With their attendant moons thou wilt desery,
Communicating male and female light,
Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stored in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.”

In such instances, the larger sun is usually of a red or orange hue, while the smaller one appears blue or green. “It may be easier suggested in words,” says Herschell, “than conceived in imagination, what variety of illumination *two suns*—a red and a green, or a yellow and a blue one—must afford a planet circulating about either; and what charming contrasts and ‘grateful vicissitudes’ a green and red day, for instance, alternating with a white one and with darkness, might arise from the presence or absence of one or other or both above the horizon.”

Although many things may be ascertained concerning these different systems, yet we have as yet no known means of determining their distances from us or from one another. We only know that it is immense without being able to assign a limit within which to place them.

In order to form a correct idea of the vastness of the fruits of astronomical research, we must cease to regard the stars which

“Stand marshaled on the mighty plain”

as stars simply, and contemplate them in their true character as *suns*. That such is their real character, is evident from their fixedness and their distance. Excepting the solar and binary systems

already mentioned, almost all the remainder are denominated *fixed stars*, from their apparent stationary situation upon the surface of the celestial sphere. Their distance from us cannot be determined directly. It is so great, however, that no change has been discovered in their size or brilliancy when seen from either extremity of the earth's orbit, although at one time we may be 190,000,000 of miles nearer to them than at another! From annual parallax observations made at the extremities of the transverse axis of the earth's orbit, it has been ascertained that the distance from us to the nearest fixed star cannot be *less* than nineteen millions of millions of miles! How much greater it really is we do not know.* Supposing the nearest fixed star to be at no greater distance, its light—travelling at the rate of 180,000 miles per second—would require about three years to reach the earth! Some astronomers have thought the actual time very much greater; and even Herschel supposes there are stars whose light would require one thousand years to reach us. When we compare the shortest possible period with eight minutes, the time occupied by light in coming from the sun to the earth, we can form some faint conception of their immense remove from us. Many of these even exceed the sun in their actual brilliancy. Dr. Wollaston has concluded, from direct photometrical experiments, that the light of *Sirius* is nearly equal to fourteen suns!

In a clear night, the naked eye reveals to us but about 2000 stars, embracing the first and sixth magnitudes inclusive; but by the aid of powerful glasses, those of as low an order as the seventeenth have been discovered. Between the sixth and seventeenth orders, the number is innumerable. More than 40,000 have been distinctly noticed and mapped down. The attention of astronomers has been directed to the point whether or not we belong to a detached stratum of stars. The result of their investigations has been—that we do. With a space penetrating telescopic power, reaching more

* The following *alleged* discovery of the parallax of one of the fixed stars, and perhaps the nearest, was reported some months ago in the German scientific periodicals.

“Mr. Bezze! a German astronomer, has made one of the greatest discoveries of modern times, by having ascertained the parallax of the double star 61 Cygni. He found, from repeated observations made from August, 1837, to March, 1840, that the parallax of a cygnia did not exceed thirty-one hundredths of a second, which places the distance of that star from us at nearly 670,000 that of the sun, or which is nearly sixty-four millions of millions of miles, or, more nearly, 63,650,000,000,000 miles. This immense distance can better be conceived when we state, that if a cannon ball were to traverse this vast space at the rate of twenty miles a minute, it would occupy more than six millions of years in coming from that star to our earth; and if a body could be projected from our earth to 61 Cygni, at thirty miles an hour, which is about the same rate as carriages on rail-roads travel, it would occupy at least ninety-six millions of years. Light, which travels more than eleven millions of miles in a minute, would occupy about twelve years in coming from that star to our earth.”

than five hundred times the distance of *Sirius*, it has been determined that we belong to a stratum or cluster of stars whose length is about one thousand times the distance between *Sirius* and the sun, and whose thickness is about two hundred times the same distance. A great many other similar strata or clusters have been discovered, some of which even exceed our own in magnitude! One of these, seen in the constellation *Lynx*, appears nearly circular, and is one of the most beautiful objects of telescopic investigation.

The inquiring mind often seeks, with anxious solicitude, for the reasons why so many vast and luminous bodies are scattered throughout the regions of space. It cannot be to afford their mild but inefficient light to us during the absence of the sun. And we cannot avoid the conclusion that "these are themselves suns, and may, perhaps, each in its sphere, be the presiding centre around which other planets—or bodies of which we can form no conception from any analogy offered by our own system—may be circulating."

Are all these various systems separated, disconnected, having no bond of union whatever subsisting between them as members of the same great community? To entertain such a supposition would be far more difficult than to suppose that the same influences which bind the members of one system to each other by indissoluble bands, extends throughout all space, uniting in perfect harmony all the parts of the vast creation. Systems may be united with systems, like a band of lovely sisters, thus constituting a new order; and these again uniting, may produce a similar organization—and these again, another; while Heaven itself, the centre of all happiness and the blissful abode of unveiled Deity, may be the common centre of the whole!

"Omnipotence the corner stone
Of all creation laid,
And by indissoluble bands
A lasting union made.

"A noble structure—vast, sublime—
One great harmonious whole—
Shall speak his praise while time endures
Or endless ages roll."

Could we range the universe at pleasure, and reaching its utmost limits, plant our feet on

"Th' extremest orb of Nature's farthest bound,"

what a delightful prospect would be presented to our wondering eyes. Before us, and in the dim distance, world upon world and system upon system are spread out in all the splendour and profusion of which the mind can conceive; while behind us is nought but space—immeasurable, boundless, infinite space, without one object upon which the weary eye can rest to relieve the painful void. How delightful such a situation to contemplate the vastness of the creation, and thence upon the threshold of nature's infinite temple, adore the majesty of the Creator. But where can such a place be found! Shall we transport ourselves to the most distant member of our own family? We have seen that there are other systems, whose distance from us must be immeasurably greater than that of the remotest planet. Shall we place ourselves upon the most distant of these, beneath a blue, a red, a purple, or a golden sky, and thence view the widespread manifestations of Jehovah's handiwork? Even then we could not see the whole—for beyond their utmost limits, worlds on worlds in numbers infinite still, mark the distance in advance. And when all these are passed, and the imagination, with weary wing, seeks a resting-place upon their utmost verge, an infinitude of worlds remains still unexplored—and even space itself seems converted into innumerable systems, which obstruct her vision and impede her progress. Wearied and discouraged, she attempts a return; but the dim light of her native earth has faded; the sun, whose rays illumined the earlier part of her journey, diminished to the feeblest star, has long since ceased to be visible. No polar star directs her course, by whose familiar guidance she may once more behold those scenes endeared by early association; but lost in immensity, she veils her face—and kneeling before the central altar of the Temple of Deity, adores the Author of the whole, and seeks a more complete knowledge of Himself, His attributes and His works.

THE COUNTRY COUSINS.

BY ANNA FLEMING]

"Is not this too bad, Mary?"

"What is it?"

"A letter from Aunt Freeman, to say she is coming to spend a fortnight with us."

"Dreadful! Does mother know it?"

"Oh yes. She has just gone out and left the letter for us. What shall we do?"

"I'm sure I don't know. When will she come? Let me see the letter."

"Here it is."

(Mary reads.) "'If thee has no objection, my daughter and myself——' Why, the daughter is coming too."

"Yes, indeed."

"'Have not seen the city for twelve years.' Gracious, what will they look like when they do come! 'Be down on Tuesday.'"

"Well, since they are coming we must make the best of it; and then there's another thing, Mary, they are very rich."

"That does not make the smallest difference. Country people are always stingy."

"But Aunt Freeman is not stingy, I'm sure. You know I stayed there once for a week."

"You were such a child then you were no judge. I dare say she gave you plenty to eat, and therefore you thought her very liberal."

"Indeed she did. But I remember being struck on many occasions with her generosity. I am sorry, nevertheless, that they are going to inflict a visit on us just at this time."

"So am I. You know my birth-day party is to be on Friday. What in the world shall we do with them then? Do you think they would come in the room?"

"Come in the room?—Why, to be sure they would. They would be delighted, depend upon it."

"What do they look like? Tell me; you know I have never seen them."

"When I was at their house, Aunt Freeman wore a little plain starched muslin cap and a drab dress with sleeves to the elbow, and mittens."

"Horrible! And the daughter, what is her name?"

"Abigail. Oh, Abigail is a young lady of thirty, half Quaker and half not."

"I know the kind—plain straw bonnets with no ribbon on them."

"Exactly; and fawn-coloured silk."

"Yes."

"Of course, she will walk out with us every day?"

"To be sure she will."

"A very bright idea has struck me. Let us ask

Cousin Maria Derby to pay us a visit whilst Aunt Freeman and Miss Abigail are here. She is so amiable, that the very fact of their being strangers would enlist all her sympathies in their favour; and whilst she would be amusing them and showing them the lions, she would at the same time be taking a great deal of trouble off our hands."

"So she would; and I dare say she would be very glad to come. You know they are not well off, and I do not believe her home is a very comfortable one. But here is mother coming—let us hear what she says."

Mrs. Derby was a lazy, ease-loving woman, and entered very readily into any proposal that would relieve her from the anxiety attendant upon entertaining two country cousins; so the two girls eagerly set off in quest of their Cousin Maria.

Maria Derby's father had, like many others, undergone heavy losses, so that his family were reduced to painfully narrow circumstances. Maria was the eldest of the seven children, and on her the change in her lot bore very hard. She exerted herself to the utmost of her abilities to keep up a creditable appearance and assist her mother in the care of the children.

When her cousins entered the small sitting-room, they found Maria busily employed in teaching three children to spell. She started up on seeing them.

"I hope we do not disturb you, Maria; but we are come to bid you leave off this tiresome work and come and get up your spirits at our house."

"No—no—tell her the truth, Elizabeth. The fact is, Maria, there are some country cousins, very nice, plain people, coming to stay at our house for two weeks, and we do not feel inclined to devote ourselves to them as much as they will no doubt expect; so we came here in great haste to ask you how you would like to come and take a part in it."

Upon hearing this, Maria coloured with delight. She knew by experience the comforts and luxuries with which her aunt's house abounded, and she longed to exchange for a short time their own ill-warmed, comfortless rooms, for the spacious and luxurious apartments in —— street. But a moment's reflection reminded her that her parents must in her absence submit to their usual privations without the aid of her ever active spirit to smoothe the difficulties and make both ends meet, so she replied, with tears in her eyes—

"You are very good—very good, indeed; but I cannot come."

"You must not say that, indeed you must not. You want a little shaking up to rouse you. You will grow old before your time if you sit here and

mope this way all day long. You must come, indeed. I'm sure you would be amused."

"There is no doubt of that; but my mother —"

"Oh, we will settle it with her. Where is she?"

"In the kitchen."

So down into the kitchen ran Mary and Elizabeth, followed by Maria.

When the mother was made acquainted with the invitation for her daughter, she was very anxious for her to accept it.

"But there will be nobody to teach the children."

"Oh, I will give them a holiday. I am sure they deserve it, poor little things."

"And all the other things I have to attend to every day?" said Maria, anxiously.

"Why, Maria, you know you are not obliged to be with us all the time. You can come round here every day and see how your mother comes on."

"So she can, yes. I do wish you would go. I am sure I shall not miss you at all. Jane is old enough to do a good many little things now; and it will be so pleasant for you."

It was therefore settled that Maria was to go to her aunt's a day or two before the time when the country cousins were expected, and the lively girls hastened home, delighted with the success of their mission.

We will now pass over the few intervening days, and look in upon Mrs. Derby's parlour and its inmates about a quarter of an hour before the time when Aunt Freeman and her daughter Abigail were to be expected.

They were all assembled. Mary and Elizabeth were doing worsted work at the window, Maria doing plain sewing in the corner, and Mrs. Derby doing nothing in an easy chair.

"I do hope James Morley will not come here this evening, Mary. He thinks so much of our family, I should die with vexation if he were to see our country cousins."

"And I hope Julia Smith won't be here any day soon; but we cannot expect all our acquaintances to stay away for two weeks. But where is Maria?"

"On a little stool in the corner. Do look at her, sewing as if for her living. How can you sew so fast, child?"

"I may have it to do for my living, yet. It is well I can sew fast."

"But you need not do it now. Come here to the window, and look out."

"Don't let those girls tease you, my dear," said Mrs. Derby, yawning.

Maria smilingly arose and seated herself by Mary, saying—

"It must be nearly time for them to come, now."

In a few minutes, a very old-fashioned high carriage was seen moving about the neighbourhood, inquiring first at one door and then at another, while two female heads were protruded, one from each side.

"Here they are, Lizzy; do look at them. One,

two, three, four hair trunks, all moth eaten. They will be here in a moment:" and with a tremendous bang, the ponderous vehicle swung itself down in front of Mrs. Derby's.

"Here they are, at last, mother. Now for grave looks, girls. Don't make me laugh, Mary; I feel very much like it already. Have on your best and stiffest manners, Maria. I intend to courtesy to the ground."

"Hush, Lizzy, do; they are coming in the front door. We must go meet them in the entry."

And hastening into the vestibule, Mrs. Derby, her two daughters and her nieces, met two odd looking people, who were by them ushered into the parlour. When the first animated greetings were over, the whole family sat down and began to appear in their native characters. Aunt Freeman was very talkative, and took a great deal of notice of every body and every thing around her. Abigail sat stiff and prim as a poker, never venturing on an original remark, and making the shortest possible answers to all the questions put to her by the three girls.

"Molly has grown a good deal since I saw her last," said Aunt Freeman, looking affectionately at Mary; "and as to Betsy, I never would have known her at all. Does thee remember, child, the time thee fell in the wash kettle?"

"No I don't, Aunt Freeman."

"And this is thy niece?"

"Yes."

"I don't believe you ever saw me before," said Maria, politely.

"Do you feel fatigued after your journey, Cousin Abigail?" asked Mary.

"No."

The girls looked at each other.

"Would you like some refreshment?"

"Yes."

Again the girls exchanged glances. Maria got up and asked her aunt's permission to ring the bell.

"Certainly, my dear; have some cake and wine brought. I wonder neither of the girls thought of it before."

"How is Thomas?" asked Aunt Freeman.

"My husband?—he is very well, thank you, and very busy. He is away on business now; but I expect him back in a few days."

After the cake and wine, Aunt Freeman took her knitting out of her pocket and set herself diligently to work. Maria and Mary and Elizabeth moved their seats nearer to Cousin Abigail, and asked her what sort of needle-work she was fond of.

"Most any kind."

"Did you ever do any of this?" asked Mary, unfolding a handsomely worked bell rope.

"No."

"Or this?" said Elizabeth, pointing to a patch-work chair.

"No," was again the sullen reply.

It must be confessed both these questions were put rather in a spirit of vanity than of kindness.

They were both much more anxious to display their own performances than to afford entertainment to their cousin.

In this manner passed the first afternoon and evening in ineffectual attempts on the part of the girls to induce Cousin Abigail to talk, in determined silence on her part, and in great vivacity and inquisitiveness on the part of Aunt Freeman. Fortunately for the equanimity of the two girls, no visitors came that evening, but during the next morning several people called. Aunt Freeman was very much gratified, and talked to every body, knitting all the time very fast.

In the afternoon, Mary and Elizabeth wanted to go out, so they provided Cousin Abigail with some entertaining books, and went up stairs to get ready. When they came down, all nicely dressed, they found Cousin Abigail standing in the middle of the room, attired in a new brown silk dress, a brown silk hat, and a very small white merino shawl.

"Are you going out?"

"Going with you," was the laconic reply.

Whatever Cousin Abigail did say, she always said very fast.

"Thee had better buy a good sized tea-kettle, Abby, if thee is going out. Thee knows we want one very much, and may be if we don't get it now we may forget it at the last."

Mary and Elizabeth, knowing their cousin's great talent for silence, went along absorbed in their own concerns, taking very little notice of her. When they had been out some time, they passed a tinman's.

"Going to buy my kettle now."

"To be sure. Stop, Cousin Abigail wishes to stop here."

In they went. Various bright kettles were inspected, and one fixed upon; and Cousin Abigail, to the girls' great horror, advanced towards the door with the kettle hanging on her arm.

"Why, Cousin Abigail, you surely are not going to walk home with that thing!"

"Why not?"

"Oh, Cousin Abigail, you cannot! Let them send it, or we will send for it."

"I am going to carry it."

And the poor girls were obliged to walk through the streets, one on each side of Cousin Abigail and the tin kettle.

Maria spent the afternoon in reading to the old lady, whose eyes were no longer good, and who was very much pleased by her kindness and freedom from selfishness. When the others came in, she took the opportunity to put on her bonnet and run home for half an hour, and assist her mother in various small matters.

Another time, Mary and her mother were out with Mrs. Freeman, when the old lady took a fancy to buy some plants for her garden in the country. So searching among a great many, she at last fixed upon a stick about eight feet long, with a large lump of wet mud at one end; and paying the price, shouldered it and turned homewards.

"What in the world is it?" asked Mary, in dismay.

"A dahlia root. I have been wanting one for some time."

"But that bare stick won't grow."

"Indeed it will. A few months care will make a beautiful thing of it. It's not very heavy, Molly; but if I should get tired, I know thee will help me carry it."

Mary heard these words with alarm, and before they had got much farther, her aunt turned to her, saying—

"Molly, child, take this now, and carry it carefully."

Mary hung back in horror.

"I can't, indeed, Aunt Freeman; I should certainly break it."

But the old lady was resolute, and assured her there could be no possible danger of that.

So poor Mary was obliged to take it, however much against her inclination. Fortunately, the distance was very short, and as it was nearly dark, she counted upon meeting no one; but greater mortification was yet in store for her. At the corner of the street, she was joined by Mr. Robinson, a young man whom she liked very much. He walked with her to the door; and when he took his leave, in spite of all she had suffered, Mary felt as if she liked him better than ever, for he had not seemed to notice her burden.

"What lad was that?" asked Aunt Freeman, when they were seated at the tea-table.

This, together with the strange tone in which it was asked, was too much for Mary—she burst into a loud fit of laughter.

The old lady looked very much offended; and if Maria had not adroitly changed the subject by talking very loud and very fast about some raspberry jam she was recommending to the old lady, there is no knowing what might not have ensued.

Mary's disposition to risibility continued throughout the evening. Once it was called forth by Cousin Abigail's hob-nailed shoes, and again by Aunt Freeman's recommending rattle-snake skin as a certain cure for the rheumatism.

"Mary is very merry to-night," said her mother, as some sort of palliation.

"Such merriment should have been whipped out of her many years ago," suggested Aunt Freeman, giving her a severe look.

Mary's laughter became at this so very difficult to restrain, that she rose and left the room.

At bed-time, Mary and Elizabeth went into Maria's room, where the following conversation took place.

"Oh, Maria, how can you sit so still and look so grave, and behave so well? Did you see how I laughed? I wish I had the command over my risible muscles that you have. I suppose I have lost favour with my aunt and cousin most completely."

"I am afraid you have, indeed," said Elizabeth.

"I was very nearly as bad as you myself; but I

was in a recess, so no one saw me. But I am very much surprised at Maria, to think of her devoting herself to them in that way."

"I pity them. They are among people whose ways of thinking and mode of life are very different from their own, and if they are ridiculous to us, I have no doubt we are quite as much so to them. I feel as if it were my duty to try to make their time pass as pleasantly as possible; and if I succeed in that, the little sacrifices of my time I make to them are well repaid."

"How good you are, Maria. I wish I were like you."

"Do try, then, not to laugh so much, won't you?"

"Oh, it is too late now. Nothing I could do would ever retrieve my lost character. I may laugh as much as I please now, but as for you two——"

"Give Maria all the credit, and me none. I don't deserve any."

The day of the party was now very fast approaching; and mingled with the glee of expectation in the girls' hearts, was the fear of being made in some way ridiculous by their country cousins, who, of course, soon found out that something unusual was going on.

"Aunt Freeman's coming in the room is entirely out of the question," said Elizabeth; "but as to Cousin Abigail——"

"There is no knowing," said Mary, "but that she may undertake to appear in her hob-nails and the little white merino shawl. She is so demure, one can never find out what she means to do."

"Do you know any thing about it, Maria?"

"No, I don't. I have been with her all the morning, but I have not heard her say any thing at all about it."

"Well, whenever you do hear any thing, come and let us know at once, will you?"

Maria agreed; and accordingly she, half an hour afterwards, returned to her aunt's room, where the important point of carpet down or carpet up was being discussed.

"Good news—good news for you, girls: Cousin Abigail says she cannot think of coming into the room on Friday night."

"Delightful!" exclaimed Mary. "What a dear, good, sweet creature she is."

"I am so enchanted, for my part, that I could almost go up and beg her to come."

"Better let her take her own way, especially as it is one which gives such general satisfaction."

Their fears thus quieted, the preparations for the

party went on rapidly and prosperously. Every body in the house was busy, and Maria, busiest of all, always ready to assist any one, always cheerful, always willing, so that her aunt said—

"All the girls are very industrious, but I do think Maria does more than both the others together."

Meanwhile, Aunt Freeman and Cousin Abigail kept generally in their own room, and, to tell the truth, were very little noticed by either Mary or Elizabeth. With Mrs. Derby they had always been pleased, and as to Maria they really seemed to love her.

At last the long-wished-for Friday night arrived, and, much to the astonishment of Mrs. Derby and her daughters, Maria refused to appear among the company, saying she did not think it would be kind towards the guests up stairs, who were so much accustomed to having her with them that they would undoubtedly miss her very much; and in spite of all remonstrances, she spent the evening in reading aloud to the old lady, who always sat up late.

"I think Abigail might read to her mother," said Mary.

"She cannot," said Maria; "she is subject to a disease in the throat."

The next morning, when Mary and Elizabeth went into their aunt's room to sit with her a few minutes, they found her on her knees packing a trunk, and Maria assisting her.

Cousin Abigail came out of a closet with a shoe in her hand, with which she had been killing cock-roaches.

"Going home to-morrow."

"Going home to-morrow! Why do you go so soon, Aunt Freeman? What is the meaning of this? You have only been here ten days."

"Think, and thee will soon find out the meaning of it. But before I go, Molly, I have something to say to thee."

"A scolding, I suppose," thought Mary.

But she was mistaken. What the old lady did say to her was said in private, and so kindly, that tears were in Mary's eyes when she left her.

The next day the country cousins took their leave. Before they went, however, Aunt Freeman had a long interview with Maria; for having by accident become acquainted with the misfortunes of her family, the old lady had resolved to make her a lasting reward for the kindness she had shown her and her daughter.

THE DAMPWOODS.

A SLIGHT SKETCH.

BY MISS LESLIE.

FRANK SHELFORD had just arrived from one of the principal cities in the west, where, though a very young man, he was a partner in a large and flourishing mercantile establishment. He brought with him a letter to Mr. Dampwood, of Philadelphia, with whom his father had long done business; and as it enclosed a bill for a thousand dollars, Shelford resolved to deliver it immediately, and into no hands but those of Mr. Dampwood himself. With this intention, having indulged in a leisurely and excellent repast at the hotel tea-table, and exchanged his travelling dress for habiliments perfectly *comme il faut*, and taken a view in the glass, and congratulated himself on his hair and eyes and teeth (all of which he could not but perceive were likewise *comme il faut*,) our hero set out for the residence of Mr. Dampwood, whom he understood to have daughters. He recollected dining at this house with his father, on a former visit to Philadelphia, when he was a bashful boy who did not speak before strangers. But he had then seen no lady except Mrs. Dampwood, who presided at the head of the table, unsupported by any other females; and of her conversation he remembered nothing, because he was all the while earnestly engaged in listening to Mr. Dampwood's lamentations over the badness of the times, and his anticipations that they would "be worse by-and-by," and that nothing could save the country from utter ruin.

On the present occasion, when Mr. Shelford (now a very handsome young gentleman that had outgrown his bashfulness) was ushered into the front parlour, he found there Mrs. Dampwood and her two daughters, all seated at a table that was covered with materials of which they were making articles for a fancy fair. In a corner, at a little distance, sat a very young girl at a small stand. She had a book in her hand and a pile of other books before her, which, as might be seen at a glance, were all lesson books. Her eyes were screened by a projecting green silk shade, and, though evidently no child, she was attired in a short frock and very visible pantalets.

Mr. Francis Shelford having introduced himself and inquired for Mr. Dampwood, was informed of that gentleman having gone to the Exchange, after tea, to learn the news by the eastern mail; but Mrs. Dampwood requested him to be seated and wait her husband's return. Shelford, being desirous to deliver the letter with its enclosure, as soon as possible, and scrupulously intent on putting it into Mr. Dampwood's own hands, took the chair

that was indicated to him. He placed it near the work-table, and opposite the stand at which sat the fair student, who made an attempt to unrie and take off her green shade, but was prevented by Mrs. Dampwood saying to her, in a voice meant to be low, but in reality very audible—"Elizabeth, keep that on."

Mrs. Dampwood stiffly and formally introduced her daughters, Alice and Agnes, who as stiffly and formally inclined their heads to Shelford's smile and bow, and then proceeded steadfastly with their pin-cushion work. Observing Shelford look towards the third young lady as if expecting that she also would be mentioned to him, Mrs. Dampwood coldly said—"The child at her lessons is a niece of mine from Dauphin county, and is staying with me to finish her education. Elizabeth, take your elbows off the table. She goes to one of the best schools in the city, but it really requires all three of us, (both my daughters and myself,) to regulate her behaviour when at home. She has been brought up as wild as an Indian, and never studied any thing but nonsense. Elizabeth, mind your book."

Elizabeth minded her book, and her aunt and cousins all turned their heads round to see that she did so.

There was a silence of some moments, which Shelford employed in wondering if the upper part of the fair school-girl's face could be as pretty as the lower.

"Pa' stays longer than usual at the Exchange"—said Miss Alice.

"Patience is a virtue"—observed Miss Agnes.

"We would gladly have him with us; but no doubt all is for the best"—remarked Mrs. Dampwood.

Frank Shelford then, by way of saying something, spoke of the Exchange, and alluded to the beauty of the edifice.

"I think I have heard it called a handsome building"—said Mrs. Dampwood—"but, for my part, I am no judge."

"I particularly admire the vane"—continued Shelford. "The caduceus of Mercury, the god of commerce, is an appropriate symbol for a place 'where merchants most do congregate.'"

"They used to meet down Second street"—said Mrs. Dampwood. "It was quite disagreeable on that account for ladies to walk past the old coffee-house, for they were always about the steps. I have gone round a whole square to avoid that

place. They never had the consideration to keep themselves in-doors."

There was another pause—and then Shelford inquired of Miss Alice if she had read Dickens's last novel.

"What a strange name Dickens is"—was her reply.

"But there are many names still worse"—said Mrs. Dampwood. "Elizabeth, don't push up your shade to the top of your head."

"There are a great variety of names in the world"—sagely remarked Agnes.

"I have understood that Smith is rather the most common"—observed Alice.

"There are also many persons named Brown"—resumed Agnes.

"And some that are called Jones, and some Robinson"—ventured Shelford.

"Elizabeth"—said Mrs. Dampwood—"you've now got that shade down over your mouth."

"May I presume to suggest that the young lady takes it off entirely?"—said Shelford.

The Dampwoods were all shocked at his temerity, but on raising their eyes to look aghast, they saw before them such a very handsome and pleasant-faced young man, (whom they knew to be the son of a rich father,) that they felt more disposed to clemency than if he had possessed none of these advantages.

Availing herself of Mr. Shelford's suggestion, Elizabeth did take off her shade entirely; and the Dampwood ladies, after glancing all around, seemed tacitly to conclude to give up the point for the present.

To break the next silence, Shelford spoke of the magnetic telegraph, which he had seen in passing through Washington and Baltimore, and added—"It is a truly wonderful invention; and the instantaneous rapidity with which it transmits intelligence seems almost like the effect of magic."

"Magic is now quite out of date," said Alice.

"Therefore there is one sin the less in this wicked world"—said Agnes.

"The only magic that ever really existed"—observed Shelford—"must have been produced by a knowledge of certain chemical and philosophical combinations, (at a time when any acquaintance with those sciences was confined to a very few persons,) by successful practice in manual dexterity, and by skill and perseverance in teaching and controlling animals. We are all familiar with the feats of circus horses and circus riders—"

"I am *not*"—interrupted Miss Alice, proudly.

"And I never wish to be"—exclaimed Miss Agnes, indignantly.

"Happily, I have always preserved my children from public shows"—said Mrs. Dampwood, solemnly.

"I was going to relate"—persisted Shelford—"that Ward, the man who, two centuries ago, first taught a horse to perform such exploits as are now common at all equestrian exhibitions, after exciting much admiration and receiving great favour in

England and France, went unfortunately to Rome. He was there seized by the Inquisition and condemned to a dreadful death as a sorcerer; his poor horse suffering the same punishment as a demon or familiar spirit."

"Mrs. Bradley has been looking at a pair of new horses for her carriage"—said Alice, turning to her mother.

There was again a pause; and Frank Shelford began to despair of obtaining an appropriate reply from either of the ladies, let him say what he might. "Is this?"—thought he—"owing to obtuseness of comprehension, paucity of ideas, narrowness of mind, self-sufficiency, acerbity of temper, want of tact, hardness, stiffness, or a combination of all?" He concluded, however, that the dim, cold planet of the Dampwood family had always revolved in a very small orbit—and he was right.

Now Shelford was a person who liked equally to be amused himself and to be the cause of amusement to others, and nothing was more irksome to him than a dead silence. Though a very young man, he had read much, heard much and remembered much; but he had not yet lived long enough in the world to be cured of the folly of occasionally throwing pearls to swine. He had a quick perception of the ludicrous, and great enjoyment of humour. His memory was furnished with a copious collection of anecdotes, which he was conscious of telling very well; and as one anecdote often brings on another, he regarded them as excellent props to a flagging conversation—so he thought he would relate an anecdote; being also desirous of seeing how the faces of the Dampwoods would look when they smiled, and particularly anxious to hear Elizabeth laugh.

But he saw no opening for an anecdote of any description, and was almost tempted to follow the example of a noted *raconteur*, who, when hopeless of an opportunity of introducing his favourite story, would give a sudden start, and exclaim—"Ha! did not I hear a gun? Oh no—it must have been some other sound. But, now I talk of guns, did you ever hear of a certain great general, who, at a certain great battle," &c., &c., &c.

At length our hero found a gun by raising his eyes to a print that hung over the sofa, and saying—"That is a very fine engraving of Stuart's Washington."

"Mr. Dampwood bought it at a sale!"—said Mrs. Dampwood.

"And yet!"—observed Shelford—"many of Washington's contemporaries thought that Stuart had not done justice to his immortal subject. And no wonder, for the artist often declared that he had been so much in awe of his illustrious sitter that he felt nervous all the time. Yet he had painted the King of England. *Apropos de bottles*—"

"Sir?"—said Mrs. Dampwood, gravely raising her eyes from her work. "Excuse, sir, my not understanding the expression you have last made use of."

"It is French, ma"—said Miss Alice—"it belongs to the French language."

"Do either of you know the meaning of it?"—inquired Mrs. Dampwood, turning first to one daughter and then to the other.

"I can't say I can call it to mind just now"—replied Alice. "It could not have been in my vocabulary, or in my dialogue book."

"And I am sure I do not recollect any thing like it in *Tellemaque*"—said Agnes. "It seems to me that *bottes* must mean boots."

Shelford heard something in the direction of Elizabeth's little table that sounded very much like a smothered laugh.

"Please to explain, sir"—said Mrs. Dampwood, coldly.

How could he explain? There was no possibility of doing so to such an audience. But he made a mental vow never again to say *apropos de bottes*.

"I was referring"—said he, evasively—"to Stuart while in England having painted a portrait of George the Third."

"Elizabeth, fix your shade properly, and attend to your studies"—said Mrs. Dampwood.

"The American artist"—proceeded Shelford—"took the precaution, before the first sitting, to inquire of a nobleman about the court, as to the manner in which he was expected to demean himself in the presence of royalty. He was told that, according to etiquette, he must speak only when spoken to, and that he must on no account presume to make any remark or to introduce any topic of his own, but that his share of the conversation was to be limited to concise and respectful answers when the king deigned to ask him a question; and that he must all the time take especial care to utter as few words as possible.

"Few words are always best"—observed Alice.

"Least said is soonest mended"—remarked Agnes.

"It would be a good rule for every one to speak only when spoken to"—added Mrs. Dampwood. "Now, sir, will you please to proceed. Elizabeth, move farther off."

"In consequence of this lesson"—proceeded Shelford—"Stuart, a man of great wit and vivacity, and a most amusing talker, kept himself in check during all the first sitting, saying nothing about any thing, and merely venturing to reply in very short sentences and in a very respectful tone, to the abrupt questions and disjointed chat of the majesty of England. The king, after awhile, became tired of talking, and the conversation, such as it was, dropped into silence. On the next sitting, Stuart resolved upon risking the resumption of his natural manner, trusting to the effect he was accustomed to produce in pleasing his sitters by amusing them highly. This time he talked of his own accord, and very soon with his usual ease and vivacity. He made himself as amusing as possible, and the king, who could not be otherwise than exceedingly entertained, laughed heartily and seemed highly to enjoy the sitting.

"Previous to his third and last interview with royalty, Stuart was again admonished by the nobleman who had given him the first caution, and also by several others. They all told him that he had committed a great and unprecedented solecism in propriety by so utterly forgetting himself as to feel at ease in presence of the sovereign, and to presume to take the liberty of conversing freely with his majesty; who, though he might graciously condescend to overlook the ignorance and presumption of the American painter, was no doubt much displeased at his familiarity. Also, that though his majesty had not deigned to mention it, the whole court was shocked at Mr. Stuart's strange behaviour, the report of which had spread through the palace before the sitting was half over. Thus schooled, the repentant artist resolved to transgress no farther, but to make atonement by maintaining, as far as possible, a respectful silence during the next sitting, and he was now glad of its being the last. Accordingly the king, somewhat surprised at the renewal of the painter's taciturnity, was again left to entertain himself."

"Is that all, sir?"—inquired Mrs. Dampwood.

"Not quite"—replied Shelford, smiling.

"Oh, I am so glad!"—involuntarily exclaimed the young lady of the lesson books.

"Elizabeth, go out of the room"—said Mrs. Dampwood.

The poor girl coloured deeply, and with quivering lip and tears springing to her eyes, rose to obey.

"Gather up your books and take them with you"—said Mrs. Dampwood—"and I shall come to your room very soon to see if you are studying."

Frank Shelford could scarcely restrain his indignation. As Elizabeth, having collected her books, was proceeding with them to the door, her green shade now hanging on her arm, he perceived that, though disfigured and embarrassed by her childish dress, which, however pretty on a veritable child, always gives an awkward and ungainly appearance to a maiden that has entered her teens, she was really a beautiful girl, with a symmetrical figure and a fine intelligent face.

"Allow me"—said Shelford—"to intercede for this young lady, and request that she may be permitted to remain."

Again all the Dampwoods looked aghast—first at their intrepid visitor, then at each other, and then at Elizabeth, who, with head turned back, was lingering on her way to the door.

"We have a great deal of trouble with this wayward child"—said Mrs. Dampwood. "Though her father, Mr. Grovenor, is my own brother, she is not the least like either myself or my daughters, and never will be."

Shelford thought so, too; but he was glad to hear Mrs. Dampwood say—

"Elizabeth, for this time you may stay. Get to your lessons, again; but if I see you once looking off, you know what you have to expect. There, now, you are moving the stand out of its place."

"Suffer me to assist you"—said Shelford, starting up and placing the stand nearer the work-table.

All the Dampwoods winced, but none of them spoke out.

"Where was I?"—continued Shelford, resuming his chair after moving it a little nearer to Elizabeth. "Oh, now I recollect. A few evenings after the third sitting, Mr. Stuart happened to be at the theatre. He was in a front row of the pit, and very near the royal box in which, that night, were seated the king and queen and some of their children."

"A dreadful example"—ejaculated Mrs. Dampwood—"taking children to the play-house!"

Shelford was glad to approach the conclusion of his unlucky anecdote, which, had he not been, compelled to fritter away and relate piecemeal, he could have finished in less than five minutes.

"Being close to the royal box"—continued Shelford—"Stuart was much diverted on hearing the king say to the queen, in his usual rapid manner—'Look—look—there's Stuart, the American painter. That's Stuart. Sat to him for my picture—sat three times. First day he hardly said a word—thought him stupid. Next time he talked all the while—very amusing—very amusing—kept me laughing. Third day he was silent again—very dull—very—did not amuse me at all. Strange fellow, that. Like a nine-pin—like a nine-pin—big in the middle and small at both ends.'"

Elizabeth now laughed out, and trying the next moment to check herself, was set off again by Alice Dampwood, saying—"Nine-pins and all other games should be prohibited by law."

"Is that all, sir"—enquired Agnes.

"All—entirely"—replied Shelford. "I have, at last, finished my story."

"Oh! do tell another"—exclaimed Elizabeth—"pray do."

"The girl must be delirious"—said Mrs. Dampwood—looking at both her daughters—"I never knew her act thus before—at least not quite so strangely."

Shelford had actually drawn his chair beside Elizabeth's, and began to converse with her.

"Elizabeth is talking"—said Agnes—"she is talking out."

"Let her alone for the present"—replied Alice—"and do not let us disturb ourselves any more about her this evening. It will only make things worse. Behold how she is aided and abetted."

"She can be properly punished for it to-morrow, when she has no one to uphold her"—added Mrs. Dampwood.

For the next half hour there was nothing more done to Elizabeth; except to give her occasionally a trio of ferocious looks.

"I cannot make him out"—said Alice to her sister, and glancing towards Shelford. "Do you not think there is something idiotic about his mouth?"

"I do not know"—replied Agnes. "There seems to be a wildness in his eyes."

"Cease now"—said Mrs. Dampwood—"you are going too far—do give him his due; he has rather a bright, handsome face after all—there is nothing the matter with him but light-mindedness, and want of seriousness. And his father is a very rich man. We must not let him waste himself on Elizabeth."

Then elevating her voice (for the foregoing conference between the mother and daughters had been carried on in a whisper across the table) Mrs. Dampwood cleared her throat, and after two hems and a short cough, uttered the words—"Mr. Shelford."

"Madam!"—replied Shelford, turning round from Elizabeth.

"I suppose sir, you have seen our market?" said his hostess. "Philadelphia market, I believe, is universally considered the finest in the whole world. And this has been an unusually early season. We had asparagus in March."

Our hero might now have said with the musician Handel, putting his finger to his forehead—"I have got a thought." And this thought immediately elicited itself in his exclaiming—"Apropos to asparagus. Fontenelle was one day visited in his library by an old acquaintance whom he had not seen for many years."

"Who is Fontenelle?" interrupted Agnes—trying to look interested—"Is he another painter?"

"Oh! no"—replied Shelford—"he was a celebrated French poet, of the last age."

"He is dead then"—said Agnes.

"Near a century ago"—answered Shelford—"A friend of Fontenelle chancing to visit him one morning, the poet invited him to stay and dine; adding, by way of inducement—"I am going to have asparagus, for the first time this season. I really know nothing more delicious than asparagus nicely drest with sweet fresh oil."

"I like asparagus myself"—replied the visitor—"provided it is drest with butter; having, I am sorry to say, an unconquerable aversion to oil."

"Well then"—said Fontenelle, after a short pause—"if you will allow me the pleasure of your company, I will have two dishes made of the asparagus—one half shall be drest with butter for you; the remainder with oil for myself."

"His friend assented; and Fontenelle left him for a moment to apprise the cook of this new arrangement. On his return, while earnestly engaged in conversation, the friend suddenly fell off his chair in a fit, and expired immediately. Fontenelle then ran to the head of the stairs, and called out to the cook.

"All in oil—all in oil—the butter man's dead."

Unlucky anecdotist! The Dampwood ladies now put on shocked faces, (Agnes's being the least shocked,) and murmured something about the dreadful depravity of human nature, and of French nature in particular. Each made an indignant comment on the wicked want of feeling in the host, (Agnes's being the least indignant,) and Alice solemnly demanded the moral of the story.

Shelford would have been exceedingly discon-

certed, if he had not been exceedingly amused ; and he could not refrain from smiling, especially as he saw the ever-sinning Elizabeth hiding her face behind her open book to conceal something verging towards laughter.

Our hero began to think it was time to retreat, and said—"Perhaps I had best call again, or see Mr. Dampwood at his store to-morrow."

"Pa' will certainly be home very soon, now"—said Agnes. "He may have gone from the Exchange to the Athenæum to read the new English papers."

"Be seated, sir"—said Mrs. Dampwood. "My husband is always in his own house before nine o'clock. We hope you are not tired of our poor attempts to entertain you."

"On the contrary"—replied Shelford—"I have been exceedingly well entertained—and have many thanks to offer."

Just then, a key was heard at the front door, and Mr. Dampwood made his appearance. Shelford advanced to meet him, introduced himself, was received with great civility, presented his letter, and saw that Mr. Dampwood was naturally well pleased with its inclosure of a thousand dollar bill. He was invited to resume his seat ; and his host commenced conversation by asking Shelford if he was aware of the dreadful state of the nation. Shelford replied in the negative. And Mr. Dampwood then proceeded to enlighten him by the assurance that if the whig candidate for governor of Delaware was not elected, that unhappy little state must sink into a bottomless pit from which she could never be extricated, and doubtless in her fall she would drag down Pennsylvania already tottering, and New Jersey whose footing had always rested on nothing, and New York already torn to pieces by its hundreds of useless railroads. "Now"—continued Mr. Dampwood—"it is as clear as the light of the sun that when the Middle States begin to go all the rest must follow."

"But where will they go to?"—inquired Shelford.

"My young friend"—said Mr. Dampwood—"I perceive you have not yet studied the condition of the Union, particularly Pennsylvania."

"I know not how a country can expect to prosper"—said Mrs. Dampwood—"when there is so much wickedness among the people."

"The newspapers are full of it"—said Mr. Dampwood. "And they help most sinfully to keep it up, by the admission of so many light anecdotes, which good people ought rather to cry than laugh at."

Elizabeth and Shelford involuntarily exchanged glances.

"I was very much struck with one, which I chanced to find this evening in a paper at the Athenæum"—pursued Mr. Dampwood—"and I was told, the story, bad as it is, had been lately revived, and seen in several of those publications. It appears that a person who seems to have been a literary man, and they are generally a depraved

class from their being puffed up with worldly vanity, and pursuing a useless occupation, which very fortunately brings them no profit, but always keeps them poor ; a most lucky circumstance, for if they had the power which always and properly belongs to wealth, the world would be turned upside down, and Pennsylvania still worse off than she is"—(heaving a deep sigh, which was echoed by his wife.) "Well, sir, this writer, it appears, was sitting in his library (I suppose they must have libraries.) For my part I have never found the necessity of one ; and where newspapers (bad as they are) are staring you in the face at every corner, I see no reason why money should be wasted on books. Well, sir, this author that I speak of, was sitting in his library. It is not mentioned whether he was engaged at the time in reading or writing—perhaps both—or perhaps neither (for I do not believe the tribe is by any means industrious,) when he was unexpectedly visited by a friend, whom, for reasons not given, he had not seen for a considerable time. The friend might have been taking a voyage to India, or been all the while imprisoned for debt, which last is most likely. The author of course invited him to sit down, and it is to be supposed they entered into conversation. There is no account of the topics they discussed. They may have conversed on the state of the nation, but it is far more probable their talk was idle stuff. When the visitor rose to go, the writer had the civility to invite him to stay to dinner ; perhaps, because it was the only decent dinner he expected for a month. And still there is no mention made of any thing but asparagus."

A sort of scream was heard from Elizabeth ; and Shelford with laughing eyes pressed his finger on his lips, and motioned her to silence. The Dampwood ladies looked surprised ; but respectfully awaited the rest of pa's narrative, which he continued to utter with his eyes still fixed immovably on the mantel-piece.

"To be brief"—proceeded the narrator, who had never been brief in his life—"Asparagus was held out by the literary man, as an inducement for his guest to remain to dinner. As I said, there was no mention made of any other dish ; from which we can draw the conclusion, that authors may be very well satisfied if they can get one dish only : and doubtless they seldom count upon having meat to their vegetables. However, observe, I do not positively say that this man had no meat for his dinner—notwithstanding that he spoke only of asparagus. He said he thought it an excellent article when dressed with oil. He of course meant olive oil ; though that should have been specified. Perhaps it was for this reason, that his friend, misunderstanding him, and thinking only of the other sort, declared his preference of butter ; and if such was his idea, nobody can blame him. For my part, I have always seen asparagus served up with butter ; but then one-half the world has no notion how the other half lives: The writer (strange to say,) went so far as to pro-

mise his guest that if he would stay, the asparagus should be divided into two dishes, (perhaps he only meant plates) one of them to be done up with butter, and the other done up with oil. He *must* have meant sweet oil. The friend agreeing (how little we know what is before us) the author went to his cook to give new orders respecting the asparagus, and to say that half was to be oiled and half buttered! It is something singular that an author should possess a cook. He came back—sat down—they conversed awhile longer, no doubt on some light and trifling and unprofitable subject; literary people never seem to know any thing about the state of the nation. I suppose because they don't care, having nothing to lose. And now listen attentively—and prepare yourselves for astonishment. What is now coming will truly amaze you."

An audible giggle was heard from Elizabeth, through the fingers that covered her mouth. Shelford turned back his face, and looked steadily at the carpet behind his chair. The Dampwood ladies plied their needles with great intentness.

"I know you will be shocked"—continued the old gentleman—"but try and nerve yourselves for the catastrophe."

The ladies set their faces, bit in their lips, and drew their sewing-threads very hard. This was nerveing themselves.

"The catastrophe"—he proceeded—"which is now at hand. All of a sudden, the visitor was taken with a fit, of what sort is not specified; but it must have been a severe one, for he fell on the floor (or it might have been on the carpet; which, however, I rather doubt) and before a doctor could be summoned, (if indeed the literary man ever thought of one, which is also doubtful) the guest had departed this life. And now listen with becoming indignation to what followed. The first thought of his selfish friend was the asparagus, and he immediately desired the cook to do the whole of it in oil. 'Cook'—said he—('I am not sure these were his exact words) cook, I wish to inform you that the gentleman who expressed a preference for butter has unexpectedly deceased; therefore, as I can now have all the asparagus to myself according to my first intention, I desire you to dress the whole of it (the whole of it mark you) in oil, without a bit of butter.'"

Elizabeth could bear no more, and ran out of the room to laugh at her ease in the entry, and Shelford started up to run after her and join in her mirth. Our readers may imagine with what difficulty he restrained himself while obliged to sit and listen to his own *bagatelle* of an anecdote, slowly, solemnly and sententiously related by a dull, prosing man, who had no anecdote in his soul.

He glanced round at the faces of the Dampwood ladies, but seeing in them no expression whatever, he was at a loss to conjecture in what manner the twice-told tale had affected *them*, and to this day he has never had an opportunity of discovering.

Shelford now took his leave as speedily as politeness would allow, impatient to get into the street and have his laugh out, commencing it on the door-step.

For several days, notwithstanding his attention to the business which brought him to Philadelphia, our hero found his thoughts wandering towards Elizabeth Grovenor. Resolving to see more of her, he repaired, on the third morning, again to the mansion of the Dampwoods, where he saw only the mother—her daughters being at the fancy fair for which they had been working. He learnt from Mrs. Dampwood that her brother, Mr. Grovenor, had been in town and taken Elizabeth home with him, considering that she had had education enough. "The truth is"—continued Mrs. Dampwood—"I was not sorry to relinquish this awful charge. The care and responsibility of keeping an unmanageable little girl in order are tremendous. Elizabeth's mother having never studied any thing herself, was certainly very unfit to superintend the studies of her daughter, and, therefore, I prevailed on her parents to let me try and do something with her; but I found it a hopeless attempt to make her any thing like my own exemplary daughters."

Shelford remained a month in Philadelphia and New York, and then set out on his return home; diverging from his way to see something of Dauphin county, or rather to see something *in* it. Furnished with a letter from Mr. Dampwood to Elizabeth's father, he presented himself at the house of Mr. Grovenor, who was proprietor of a large and valuable farm, and lived like a gentleman. Shelford found all the Grovenor family delightful people, and Elizabeth particularly so. She was now properly and becomingly dressed, and looked like a handsome young lady, and not like an overgrown child. The green shade was discarded. Being perfectly natural, she was not only bright and animated, but also intelligent and kind-hearted.

Frank Shelford returned to his home beyond the Allegheny, a home that was always pleasant to him. Most American parents are desirous that their children should marry young, and Frank's father had long been urgent for his son to settle. Frank found that the time for obedience had arrived, and settled with Elizabeth Grovenor.

He forswore anecdotes, and always kept his vow in presence of dull people. Reader, remember to do the same.

THE BATTLE-GROUND OF GERMANTOWN.

(See Plate.)

THE occupation of Philadelphia by the British, after the disastrous battle of Brandywine, made the neighbourhood of this city the theatre of many brilliant exploits during the most active period of the Revolutionary war. None of these is more remarkable than the battle of Germantown, in which an attempt was made by Washington to surprise the camp of the British. The circumstance that the fate of this battle was made to turn apparently on the occupation of Mr. Chew's house by a party of the British, has given that mansion an unusual degree of celebrity. The accounts of this battle are exceedingly various and contradictory, and the causes assigned for the failure of Washington in his design are not less irreconcilable. The most satisfactory narrative of the affair we have seen, is that contained in *Armstrong's Life of Wayne*, which forms a part of the fourth volume of *Sparks's Library of American Biography*. We have the more confidence in this account from the general accuracy and fidelity to facts which characterize the whole of Mr. Sparks's work. Mr. Armstrong's account is as follows:—

“Among other means employed for the defence of Philadelphia against an attack from the water, were two forts, the one erected on Mud Island, near the western shore of the Delaware, the other at Billingsport, on its eastern bank, which, with hulks and chevaux-de-frise sunk in the river, so commanded and obstructed the navigation, as entirely prevented the ascent of the British fleet to the city. To remove impediments so unfavourable to Howe's present convenience and future purposes,

a draft of three regiments from his field force became necessary, as well to assist in reducing the forts as to cover a land transportation from Chester, until that object, the reduction of the forts, could be accomplished. Assured of this fact, and that four other regiments, composing a part of the élite, had been retained in the city for a garrison duty, Washington conceived the project of attacking and carrying by surprise the British camp at Germantown.

“The position given to the object of this enterprise had been carefully reconnoitred. On the eastern side of the main street of Germantown lay the right wing of the British army, encamped in two parallel lines half a mile apart, and extending to a wood about one mile distant from the town. On the opposite or western side of the street, with a formation similar to the former, and extending to the Schuylkill, lay the left wing. Few, if any, artificial defences had been employed on this position, the security of which had been confidently committed to the courage, fidelity and vigilance of strong picket guards and outposts, stationed on the different roads leading to the camp from north and east.

“Thus minutely informed with regard to the enemy's arrangements, Washington's plan of attack was soon formed, consisting, in its general outline, of a night march and double attack, contemporaneously made, on both flanks of the enemy's right wing, while a demonstration, or attack, as circumstances made proper, should be directed on the western flank of his left wing. With these orders

and objects, the American army began its march from Skippack, at seven o'clock in the afternoon of the 3d of October, in two columns; that of the right composed of the divisions of Sullivan and Wayne, with Conway's brigade, and assigned to the attack of the left flank of the enemy's right wing, took the Chestnut Hill road, followed by Sterling's division in reserve. The column of the left, composed of the divisions of Greene and Stephen, with McDougald's brigade and fourteen hundred Maryland and Jersey militia, destined to the attack of the right flank of the wing aforesaid, took the two eastern roads called the Limekiln and Old York roads; while Armstrong's division of Pennsylvania militia, directed against the western extremity of the British camp, pursued the Manittawny or Ridge road.

"On reaching the summit of Chestnut, two regiments, forming the head of Sullivan's column, were detached at daybreak to carry the enemy's picket guard, stationed at Mount Airy. The attack was brisk and well conducted, but the picket being speedily reinforced by a battalion of light infantry and the fortieth regiment, the defence became obstinate; nor was the position carried 'till Sullivan brought up in succession Conway's brigade and his own division to support the attack.' Colonel Musgrave, the British commanding officer at this point, unwilling to fall back on the main army, and unable longer to maintain a contest in the field against a force so far superior to his own, promptly determined to throw himself and six companies of the fortieth into Chew's house, a large and strong stone building, whence he is said to have kept up 'an incessant and galling fire' on the advancing American column—a circumstance which, whether true or false, was not permitted to impede the progress of Sullivan or Wayne, who, pressing eagerly forward, were soon and seriously engaged on different sides of the road, with detachments made by the enemy from Germantown. The conflicts which followed were numerous, close and sharp; at some points decided by the bayonet, and in their issue honourable to the American arms, as the enemy, though availing himself of every house, hedge and yard on the route, was driven back to the village as far as Church lane. The column on the left, commanded by Greene, though getting later into action than that of the right, from the *détour* necessarily made in reaching its point of attack, had now been engaged for some time, and with fortunes not widely dissimilar from those of the right. The enemy's posts on the Limekiln route had been forced, and the right flank of the camp gained, when an unexpected obstacle, a breastwork at Lucan's mill, gave a new direction to the march; in prosecuting which, two of the leading regiments broke into his camp, made more than one hundred prisoners, and at length debouched on the German-town road, near the market-house, where they halted amidst his park of artillery. Thus far the battle wore an aspect favourable to the American arms, and even gave promise of eventual success; but

here fortune changed sides, and, as she generally does, took part with the strongest. The demonstration on the left, or Schuylkill flank of the enemy, which, as already stated, made part of Washington's plan, succeeded for a time in confining the attention of that wing to the security of its own outposts; but when the day broke, and the small number of the assailing corps could be correctly estimated, this effect ceased. The detachments made in support of this flank of the encampment were recalled, and means promptly taken to reinforce the right wing, which, it was now seen, was the only object of the real attack. Grey, who led this reinforcement, was not long in reaching the scene of action, and selecting for his first experiment the two regiments which had halted at the market-house, he put that of Stewart to flight, and killing or capturing every man belonging to the other, hastened to the position on which he expected to find Sullivan; but, on reaching this, he, to his great mortification, discovered that his principal enemy had, by a rapid retreat, escaped the blow he meditated against him.

"Of the causes and character of this movement, common to all the advanced corps, we have a full and faithful exposition, given by Sullivan, in these words—'My division, with the North Carolina regiment, commanded by Colonel Armstrong, and a part of Conway's brigade, having driven the enemy a mile and a half below Chew's house, and finding themselves unsupported by any other troops, their cartridges all expended, the force of the enemy on the right, collecting on the left to oppose them, being alarmed by the firing at Chew's House, so far in their rear, and by the cry of a light-horseman on the right that the enemy had got round us, and at the same time discovering some troops flying on the right, retired with as much precipitation as they had before advanced, against every effort of their officers to rally them. When the retreat took place, we had been engaged near three hours, which, with the march of the preceding night, rendered them almost unfit for fighting or retreating. We, however, made a safe retreat, though not a regular one. We brought off all our cannon and wounded.'

"While the incidents above-mentioned were taking place in the front, others of a character still more extraordinary occurred in the rear. The annoyance, real or imaginary, given from Chew's house to the advancing troops, raised a question whether it would be safe to go forward until this unexpected fortress and its garrison were reduced. Some of the persons consulted upon this occasion, perceiving that, to withhold any considerable portion of the force destined to attack in front could not fail to jeopard, if it did not defeat the great object of the expedition, advised to a *flank* movement, and the designation of a regiment whose duty it should be to keep Musgrave shut up in his fortress, or, if he came out, to attack and destroy him.

"This common sense advice, though so obviously sound, was unfortunately made to yield to

the supposed authority of a military maxim, not well understood, and, on this occasion, entirely misapplied. A pause in the march of the reserve and other corps now took place, when a battery of six-pounders was promptly established, and a fire opened on the house, but without making any useful impression on either the walls or the garrison. An attempt to effect by bayonets and muskets what six-pounders had failed to accomplish, now followed, but being equally unsuccessful, a third expedient was found in negotiation; when the flag which accompanied the summons of surrender being fired upon and its bearer killed, this also was abandoned. As a dernier resort, investment was tried, but suddenly ended by the flight of the advanced corps and the near approach of Grant and Grey in pursuit of them. 'To cover this retreat, fell to the

share of Wayne, who, seizing an eminence near White Marsh church, established upon it a battery, by a well-directed fire, from which he so checked the enemy's career as to give it a retrograde direction, and thus enabled four hundred men, nearly sinking under fatigue, to escape the grasp of the enemy. The commander-in-chief, in his official report of this affair, says—'In justice to the right wing of the army, (composed of the divisions of Sullivan and Wayne and Conway's brigade,) whose conduct I had an opportunity of observing, as they acted immediately under my eye, I have the greatest pleasure to inform you that both the officers and men behaved with a degree of gallantry which did them the highest honour.' "